

Hills to Hawkesbury

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Community News

12th–26th January 2024 | Volume 41 – Issue 01

Stories, Local Events, People and Local Businesses



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If you prefer other channels to read news, we are also now on Telegram. Search our channel "Hills to Hawkesbury Community News". The nice thing about Telegram is you see all our news in date order. Unlike Facebook who use an algorithm so THEY decide what you see in your news feed. You can also read our latest news on twitter.

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Having our news published on different platforms means we are consistently increasing our website traffic month on month. Last month 46,000 readers visited our website, So if you are thinking of advertising with us, your ads will be seen by up to 46,000 users per month. We also send our weekly newsletter to over 6000 subscribers. In March our website was shown in search results to 706,000 potential new readers, who clicked through to our website 16,200 times.

Performance on Search results

Search type: Web | Date: 1st March – 30th March 2023

Total clicks

16.2K

Total impressions

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Australia Day in Hawkesbury

It's shaping up to be an exciting Australia Day in the Hawkesbury thanks to a wide range of events happening throughout the day for locals to attend and celebrate the start of a long weekend.

Australia Day on the Hawkesbury is a massive Council event running from 5-9pm, with a huge variety of activities to enjoy at Windsor's Governor Phillip Park. One such activity will be the thong-throwing event, which Hawkesbury Mayor Sarah McMahon called a "real highlight" of last year's event. Other activities include amusement rides, free face painting, emergency vehicle displays and a RAAF Flyover by the Roulettes.

Founder of RuffTRACK and former reality TV star Farmer Dave Graham also returns as guest MC for Australia on the Hawkesbury 2024 after his great work last year introducing live music acts with his usual charm. The night will end with a huge fireworks display for residents to enjoy with their friends and family against the beautiful backdrop of the Hawkesbury River.

Australia Day on the Hawkesbury is a dog-friendly event, so long as your furry friends are on a leash. Council encourages attendees to bring picnic rugs and chairs, but asks that all portable shelters are left at home.

Earlier in the day, attend Hawkesbury City Council's Australia Day awards where

citizens who have done exemplary work in the last 12 months will be rewarded in a special ceremony. Located at Windsor Function Centre, the ceremony will be preceded by morning tea before the ceremony properly kicks off at 11:30am. Admission to the event is free - sign up through EventBrite to support the members of your community.

The Australiana Pioneer Village in Wilberforce is open from 10am-4pm with an exciting range of things to do and see on the day. Live music will be playing throughout the day as families have the chance to hop on train and wagon rides, take part in Aussie-themed games and look at antique machinery and cars. Cost of entry is \$10 per adult, \$5 per child and \$25 for a family of four.

Windsor RSL is hosting a free show celebrating the music of INXS from 8:30pm onwards, giving Hawkesbury residents a chance to celebrate Australia Day with a tribute to one of the country's most iconic bands. Entry is free to the show, and the RSL is at 36 Argyle Street, Windsor.

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.

Bruce Fraser Honoured

The playing field at Holland Road Reserve, Glenhaven will be named the Bruce Fraser Field after Glenhaven Football Club's much loved and respected inaugural president who made the dream come true.

Hills Shire Council received 62 submissions supporting the proposal when it was placed on exhibition on council's website for 28 days leading up to December 31st.

Bruce Fraser (pictured) was 72 when he passed away in July last year. His wife Donna said naming the field after her husband was a huge honour. It will come 32 years after Bruce saw the field he pioneered first used as the club's home ground.

She said the idea to establish a Glenhaven soccer club was made over 30 years ago after Bruce attended a picnic to celebrate the centenary of Glenhaven Public School and the dads got talking.

In a tribute to Bruce Glenhaven FC wrote: "Holland Reserve was a very small unused, overgrown cricket park and holding ground for Council road shale, however it was Bruce Fraser who identified it as having enough area to have a full size football field."

As council at the time had no funds to develop the facility, Bruce with a committee and a few residents formed the Park Management Committee with the dream to develop Holland Reserve to become the home ground of Glenhaven Soccer Club. The proposal was put

to council in July 1990 and work started the next month.

Bruce organised a series of fundraising events to contribute to half of the construction costs of the field with the Glenhaven Father's Club running barbecues and raffles and sourcing donations. He also arranged a working bee of local plumbers and electricians to assist with the development of the field for free, and for his workplace, Coates Hire, to donate several pieces of equipment for use during the project.

He was coordinator and foreman during the time it took to complete.

Bruce was elected inaugural President in 1991 and was president for the next 10 years and an active member for next 20 years.

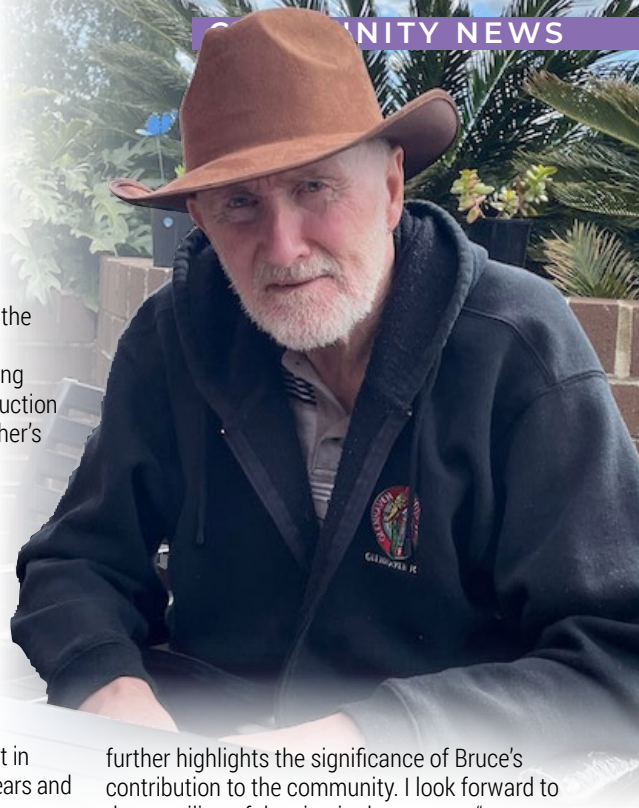
It was Hills Deputy Mayor Councillor Mitchell Blue who asked Council to Investigate opportunities to honour Bruce's legacy and in November, following discussions with Bruce's family, the Glenhaven Football Club and the community, he put up a motion suggesting the Field be named after Bruce Fraser.

He said: "I am glad to see so many submissions supporting the proposal, which

further highlights the significance of Bruce's contribution to the community. I look forward to the unveiling of the sign in due course."

Hills Shire Mayor Peter Gangemi said: "This is a fantastic response from the community and is a testament to Bruce and the incredible work he has done for the Glenhaven football community and beyond."

Donna said: "Bruce would have been so honoured to receive this recognition - I know his family and his many friends within the community are pleased for him!"



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FIREFIGHTER'S FUNERAL

A vintage Fire Truck carried fallen firefighter Michael Kidd to his funeral which was held at St Monica's Catholic Church in Richmond on December 22nd.

It was a funeral with full honours as family, friends and fellow firefighters gathered to farewell the veteran firefighter who died when a beam fell on him at a house fire in Grose Vale.

Premier Chris Minns joined hundreds of mourners at the church where the 51-year-old father-of-two was remembered as a pillar of the community, an "ever-doting dad" who had volunteered for 34 years with the Rural

Fire Service and served 13 years with Fire and Rescue NSW.

His wife of 26 years Rebecca spoke about how proud he was of his children, Lachlan and Samantha in her eulogy.

Fire and Rescue NSW Senior Chaplin Lyndsay Smith spoke on Rebecca's behalf and said: "Michael died doing what he loved: helping others and putting others first.

"He made the world a better place, he made his family feel safe, loved and valued and they thank him for it.

"He will not be forgotten."

Photo: FRNSW Facebook

DRUG CHARGES

A 51-year-old man has been arrested in Castle Hill and taken to Castle Hill Police Station where he was charged with

- Supply prohibited drug – more than commercial quantity
- Supply prohibited drug – more than indictable/less than commercial quantity
- Deal with proceeds of crime
- Organises/conducts/assists drug premises

He was one of four men arrested on Wednesday 10th January and charged after drugs and cash worth \$1.3million were seized as part of Strike Force Abut.

Strike Force Abut was established in September 2023 to investigate large-scale drug supply in Sydney's south-west and Illawarra region.

Following extensive investigations, detectives from Bankstown Region Enforcement Squad and Wollongong Police District executed seven search warrants simultaneously at homes in Castle Hill, Cecil Hills, Sadleir, Punchbowl and Bankstown at about 1.30pm on Wednesday 10th January.

Officers seized a total of 6.5 litres of 1,4-butanediol, 1kg of heroin, 981.7g

methylamphetamine, cannabis, MDMA, and cocaine, a mobile phone, and \$27,000 cash. These items will undergo forensic examination.

The drugs are believed to have an estimated potential street value of \$1,087,000.

During a search of the Castle Hill and Bankstown homes, police located two clandestine laboratories in a shed and a granny flat. A crime scene was declared, and both locations are undergoing forensic examinations by the SCC Chemical Operations Unit.

A 51-year-old man was arrested at the Castle Hill. A 29-year-old man was arrested on Joadja Road, Liverpool, and taken to Liverpool Police Station where he was charged with 29 offences,

A 28-year-old man was arrested on Hoxton Park Road, Prestons. A 49-year-old man was also arrested on Hoxton Park Road, Prestons, and charged with possess or use a prohibited weapon without permit.

Anyone with information that may assist Strike Force Abut investigators is urged to contact Crime Stoppers Information is treated in strict confidence.

CAN YOU HELP

Robbery and Serious Crime Squad detectives have renewed their appeal for public help as investigations continue into an attempted kidnapping of a man in Vineyard in 2022.

Police were told about 6.20pm on Thursday 7th July 2022, a group of unknown men attempted to force another man into a car outside a petrol station on Windsor Road in Vineyard.

The man was able to flee and was uninjured, while the unknown men left the scene in a white Mitsubishi Pajero which was later found burnt out in Macquarie Fields.

Local police commenced initial inquiries before the investigation was referred to officers from State Crime Command's Robbery and Serious Crime Squad under Strike Force Castlefield.

As the investigation continues, detectives have released CCTV and images of the men who may be able to assist with their inquiries.

One man is described as being of Pacific Islander/Maori appearance, solid build, bald with black mullet hair style. He was wearing a black jacket with a white t-shirt, black trackpants and black shoes.

Another man is also described as being of Pacific Islander/Maori appearance and medium build. He was wearing a black face covering, a black, grey and white coloured hooded jumper, grey trackpants and white shoes.

A third man was seen wearing a black balaclava, black jumper, black pants, and white shoes.

Anyone who may have information about the incident or identity of the men is urged to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or <https://nsw.crimestoppers.com.au>.

Information is treated in strict confidence. The public is reminded not to report information via NSW Police social media pages.

SCHOFIELDS CRASH

The Mounties CareFlight Helicopter was tasked by NSW Ambulance to the scene of a two-car accident in Schofields at about 2:15pm on Tuesday 26th December.

Three people were extricated from the cars after a multi-agency operation including NSW Ambulance, NSW Police and Fire & Rescue NSW. CareFlight's specialist doctor and NSW Ambulance paramedics worked together at the scene to assess and treat the patients.

CareFlight and NSW Ambulance paramedics treated a male in his 20s for head and torso injuries.

The man was then taken in a road ambulance with a CareFlight specialist doctor to Westmead Hospital in a stable condition. The other two patients were also transported by road ambulance to Westmead Hospital in stable conditions.



Help For Fire Family

BY BEV JORDAN

Locals have banded together to help a Maraylya family after their heritage home and everything they owned was destroyed by fire on Thursday, 4th January.

Bec Mills, partner Joel Ignacz and their daughter Abby had just left for a short holiday trip when fire broke out in their home of ten years.

Fire crews arrived just after 11.30am to see flames spreading through the 85-year-old weatherboard building, the former St John Evangelist Church in St John's Road, Maraylya.

Firefighters from Oakville RFS, Hillside and Box Hill Nelson worked alongside Riverstone Fire and Rescue crew to contain the fire.

The family's 2-year-old Ragdoll cat Pearl escaped with singed whiskers and was taken to a local vet but the family's other much-loved cat, Boris a 4-year-old Burmese (pictured), is yet to be found.

They are hoping he will be found soon.

Some of the hardest losses have been photographs of Bec's late father Wayne Mills who taught at Glenorie Public School and Oakville Public School and died 15 years ago. Also lost in the fire was a ring he made that was handed down to Bec.

Her twin sister Megan Mills set up a GoFund Me page which raised over \$28,000 in 24 hours. The total is now \$40,450 as locals support the long-time local residents.

Rebecca was a Student Learning Support Officer at both Glenorie Public School and Middle Dural Public School for many years before taking on the office administration role at Glenorie Public School. Joel works at Toongabbie Sports Club and Abby will be starting Year 5 at school this year.

Megan said the couple had been "overwhelmed" by the community support they had received already. <https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-bec-joel-build-up-from-the-ashes>

MEGAN'S APPEAL READS IN PART:

"On the 4th of January, Bec, Joel and Abby's home in Maraylya was made unliveable in a house fire, just hours after they took off to try and enjoy a summer holiday at the south coast. Their two gorgeous cats, Boris and Pearl escaped the blaze, with Pearl being taken to an animal hospital for treatment. Boris is sadly missing.

"Bec and her family are luckily not hurt, which we are so grateful for, but everything of theirs, built up as precious possessions over 10 years living on St John's Rd is unsalvageable, leaving the family of 3 with little to their name, and a house unlivable, just weeks before school goes back.

"Anything not burnt is melted beyond repair, from furniture to toothbrushes, clothing to bedding, appliances to food and medication, they are starting from scratch.

"Support purchasing school supplies, school uniforms etc would help get Abby ready to return to school without additional financial burden on the family, as they look to use all their disposable income in rebuilding and regaining what was lost in the fire.

Megan went on to write that donations could also be used to care for the family cats Pearl and Boris (if Boris is found) and for counselling support for the family after the traumatic event.

"I know I am biased, Bec, Joel and Abby are some of the most selfless people I know, and I'm absolutely positive of the impact they've made on their friends, family, and our Glenorie community. Now's the time to get behind these guys and show them the same support." she said.

www.gofundme.com/f/help-bec-joel-build-up-from-the-ashes

Photos are from the GoFund Me page and Oakville RFS Facebook page.



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HSC's Highest Achievers

BY JOSH KERWICK

Words of shock, relief and joy were heard around New South Wales on December 14th when Year 12 students received their HSC results, capping off the final year of schooling for thousands of young people. In the Hills and Hawkesbury, a number of students performed exceptionally well under the stress of the exam period, with high ATAR and subject scores to prove it.

Deputy Premier and Minister for Education Prue Car congratulated over 130 students from 89 schools who received First in Course awards at a special ceremony on December 13th, before all the results were officially released the next day. She said: "I am so impressed by the many talented and brilliant kids in our schools, and I'm particularly proud as Minister for Education that half of the students with First in Course awards are from NSW public schools."

Isaac Bust from Model Farms High School in Baulkham Hills was one such student, who was initially convinced he had received a prank call when told he placed first in Industrial Technology. He attributed his success in the subject to hard work both in and out of school hours, and his timber teacher Mr Venhuizen. Now looking to begin a carpentry apprenticeship, Isaac has this advice for HSC students: "Do what you love. If you love the subject, it's much easier."

Across our area, there have been a huge amount of other impressive results from a number of students. Windsor High School saw a 200% increase of students placing in the top 20% of the grade, after earlier in the year revealing that they had increased their overall attendance by 15%. Three students - Layla George, Callum Bird and Keely Martin - made the Distinguished Achievers list.

Richmond High School's Class of 2023 secured the best results ever for the school

despite a challenging past two years, with four students - Zoe Chaseling, Penny Graham, Hayley Innins and Karla Schindler - all attaining at least one Band 6 score. Principal Angela Heath said: "I am so proud of our students. The highest number of Distinguished Achievers we've seen and a load of excellent results all round are a testament to the dedication of our students and the teachers supporting them. What a win for Richmond High!"

Colo High School's class of 2023 delivered impressive results, with 14 Distinguished Achiever results and over 74% of students with results in the top three bands. The two highest ATARs came from Georgia Estrich (91.85) and Jet Loisselle (90.65), both of whom secured Band 6 scores. Many CHS students have also been nominated for their major works, with four students for SHAPE, two for ArtEXPRESS and one student, Kyah Rowley, for her work in Dance at Callback.

Principal Tara Cullen praised the 2023 cohort for their resilience in the face of many challenges over the past few years: "We're incredibly proud of the Class of 2023. They're an incredible and inspiring group of young people who achieved outstanding results this year. Colo High School, along with lots of schools in the Hawkesbury, have had lots of difficulties over the last few years due to school closures and floods in 2022. But this group of young people



Isaac Bust with Prue Car
Photo Credit: Anna Warr

worked incredibly hard, and were admirable in their success and determination to do well in the HSC."

At James Ruse Agricultural High School, seven impressive students (names listed underneath photo) all scored a perfect 99.95 ATAR; they returned to their school on December 14th to celebrate their results among their peers and teachers. One of those students, Samin Haque, recalled the moment he found out his ATAR: "It was a mixture of shock, disbelief, relief and excitement - it was a whole bag of emotions. I could enjoy this score thanks to the support my parents had given me throughout the journey."

Principal of JRAHS Rachel Powell shared her pride for the hard work of her students, saying: "We saw an increase in both the number of students that placed first in a course, as well as an increase in the number of students recognised as top achievers in 2023 HSC results. I'd like to thank all our teachers and parents for their hard work and dedication, which contributed to the excellent results achieved by our brilliant students."

Congratulations to all students who completed their HSC in 2023.

FIRST PLACE IN COURSE WINNERS IN THE HILLS AND HAWKESBURY:

Baulkham Hills High School
Christina Yang - Japanese Continuers

Cherrybrook Technology High School
Tsz Hei Ting - Japanese Beginners

James Ruse Agricultural High School
Emily Fries - Agriculture
Tarun Saravanan - Biology
Jason Phan - Chemistry
Stanley Wu - Software Design and Development

Model Farms High School
Isaac Bust - Industrial Technology

William Clarke College
Timothy Zhou - Information Processes and Technology



JRAHS Top ATAR Students. L-R: Kyle Zhang, Leo Li, Judy Chen, Rachel Powell (Principal), Tina Ouyang, Samin Haque, Faiyaz Karim and Darshanik Aryal (Photo Credit: Sophie Lambert)

out and about

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Inflatable World Dural

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Located at The Centre on Pellitt Lane Dural, Inflatable World offers wall to wall bouncing fun for all the family. There are various inflatable activities including obstacle courses, leaping from air pillow to pillow, climbing a blow up tower, slides and so much more. A section of the inflatables is dedicated to the under 5 age group as well ensuring there are inflatable activities that suit all age groups.

The venue was relatively quiet during our visit, allowing all the kids an opportunity to enjoy all the various inflatable activities without having to wait long for a turn at various activities on offer. My daughters had a lot of fun challenging each other to see who could complete each activity the fastest or who could hold on longest to various inflatables before falling off!

A café is on site and offers an All Day Breakfast as well as a tasty lunch menu. However, unlike most venues, visitors can bring their own food and snacks into the centre. For a sports stadium, Inflatable World is relatively cool with evaporative coolers in place to counteract the heat generated by the air-blowers attached to the inflatables as well as the summer heat in general.

Inflatable World Dural is open during the NSW Public School holidays and on Saturday to Monday during the School term. Sessions are for 2 hours but that is more than enough time to completely wear yourself and your children out! Make sure you have plenty of water.

If you are looking for something different to do with the kids these school holidays that is affordable as well as entertaining and good

exercise, then Inflatable World Dural is a great place to go. We had an absolute blast and can't wait to return soon.

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Liz, the aunty that every child deserves

Meet Liz, the aunty that every child deserves. A loving and attentive aunt to many nieces and nephews. One of nine siblings herself, family has always been at the heart of what makes life meaningful to Liz.

Over the years, Liz and her extended family share an unlimited number of family celebrations and memories, and still do. Her nieces and nephews have always been a focus for celebration and joy.

One day in 1989, everything changed for the tight-knit family when Liz's 5-year-old nephew Chris developed a lump in his throat. Having seen two different GPs, initially little Chris was thought to have a cold or croup, however a third GP urgently referred him to an Ear Nose & Throat Specialist.

Chris never made the appointment. That night, he developed breathing difficulties and things took a frightening turn. The next day Chris' parents took him to Camperdown Children's Hospital (now The Children's Hospital at Westmead). Chris was immediately admitted through emergency, a biopsy of the lump was taken and on further examination it turned out to be more sinister than anyone could have imagined. Little Chris was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma. The diagnosis rocked the tight knit family.

Liz is grateful for her nephew's recovery. He is now grown, has a career and is married

with a daughter of his own. He is everything his aunt could have hoped for and more, and this is why Liz is leaving a gift in her Will to Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation (SCHF).

"Many years have passed with Chris being cancer free and I felt it necessary to acknowledge Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation with a bequest gift in my Will. My hope for the future is for professional quality care to always be readily available for sick children... my decision to give back feels very rewarding" - says Liz

Like Liz, you too can help transform the lives of sick kids, and leave a gift in your Will to SCHF.

For a limited time only, from 28 December to 31 January 2024, you can write your Will online for free (saving \$180). SCHF has partnered with Safewill, Australia's most trusted online Will writing platform. Safewill makes it quick, easy and affordable to write your Will online. It takes as little as 20 minutes to complete, is reviewed by their affiliate law firm, Safewill Legal, and comes with a year of free and unlimited updates.

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Are You Getting the Most Out of Your Hearing Devices?

AN ARTICLE FROM THE TEAM AT EAR STUDIO.

When you first acquired your hearing devices, what were your expectations? Were they meant to enhance your ability to watch TV, socialise, or participate in activities in large settings such as places of worship, meetings or restaurants? It's important to reflect on these initial goals and assess whether your hearing aids are meeting your needs.

If you find yourself struggling in certain situations, it's crucial to determine whether the issue lies with your hearing aids or if your expectations were in line with what hearing aids can provide you. Are you wearing your hearing aids regularly? Consistent usage plays a significant role in maximising the benefits of your devices. If you're not wearing them as recommended, it could be a contributing factor to your difficulties.

It's also essential to consider whether your needs have changed over time. Perhaps you were once primarily staying at home but are now more socially active. If this is the case, your hearing aids may need to be adjusted to accommodate your new lifestyle.

Speaking of adjustments, when was the last time your hearing aids were fine-tuned? Regular visits to your audiologist are crucial for ensuring optimal performance. We recommend scheduling appointments 2-3 times a year, similar to how you

would take your car for regular servicing. These check-ins and tune-ups help prevent potential issues and ensure that your hearing aids are functioning optimally throughout the year.

It's worth noting that your hearing abilities may change over time. Factors such as age, exposure to loud noises, or certain medical conditions can impact your hearing. Regular visits to your audiologist allow them to monitor any changes and make necessary adjustments to your devices.

It is also very important to consider that hearing aids are only part of a quality hearing solution, factors such as communication tactics, auditory training as well as regular use may take part in determining your outcome.

At Ear Studio, we have a team of friendly and highly skilled clinicians ready to assist you. If you're experiencing any issues with your hearing devices or have concerns about their performance, we encourage you to schedule an appointment with our team. They will provide a thorough evaluation and offer solutions tailored to your specific needs.

Remember, getting the most out of your hearing devices requires proactive care and regular check-ups. By taking the time to assess your expectations, wearing your devices

consistently, and visiting your audiologist for adjustments, you can ensure that your hearing aids continue to enhance your quality of life.

Don't let hearing difficulties hold you back. We're here to help you overcome any challenges and enjoy the benefits of improved hearing.

If you or someone you know is experiencing difficulties with hearing devices, don't hesitate to reach out. Whether you prefer to give us a call or send an email, our dedicated team is here to assist you. Contact us on 02 9629 6122 or email us at reception@earstudio.com.au - We're conveniently located inside Lawton House in Castle Hill, Suite 9-10 / 60 Cecil Ave, offering off-street parking. Our clinic operates Monday to Thursday, from 9 am to 5 pm and Friday's 9am - 4pm. Let's work together to improve your hearing health!



About Us

Independently owned and operated Audiology Clinic

Ear Studio is a strictly independent hearing services provider who is not affiliated with any specific hearing aid manufacturer or brand. This independence allows us to provide unbiased recommendations based solely on the client's individual needs and preferences.

Why Choose Us?

Since our founding in 2019, our goal has always been to build an audiology competence centre which can help patients in all things hearing. From the removal of ear-wax blockages to hearing aids, Tinnitus management and cochlear implants to auditory processing rehabilitation and the diagnostic and treatment of balance issues. Joining our clinic means being part of a community that understands and supports you.

Contact us on **02 9629 6122** or email us at **reception@earstudio.com.au**

We're conveniently located inside Lawton House in Castle Hill, Suite 9-10 / 60 Cecil Ave, offering off-street parking. Our clinic operates Monday - Thursday, from 9 am to 5 pm and Friday, from 9am to 4pm.

Let's work together to improve your hearing health!

EAR STUDIO

Passion for Hearing™



Director & Founder
Daniel Fechner



Major Box Hill intersection set for transformation

One of the key intersections in Box Hill will soon feature traffic signals after The Hills Shire Council awarded a construction contract for the intersection upgrade of Old Pitt Town Road, Terry Road and Fontana Road.

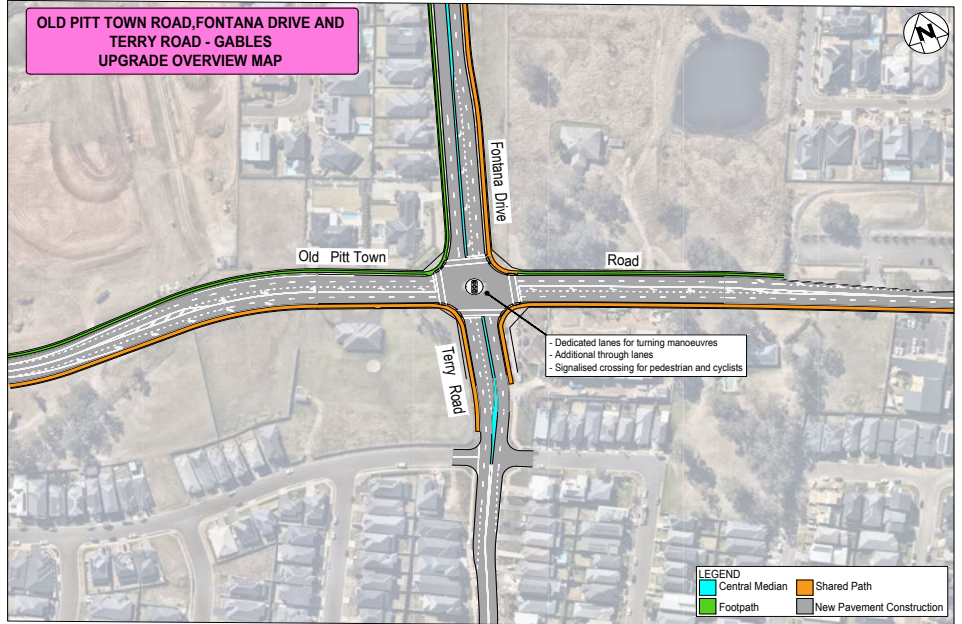
Mayor of The Hills Shire Dr Peter Gangemi said the upgrade was important for the local community.

"I've been advocating for this project alongside local residents since 2017," Mayor Gangemi said.

"We made repeated requests over many years to Transport for NSW to approve the warrants for traffic lights at this intersection with our request only being granted in 2022.

"The awarding of the tender for construction is an important step towards the completion of the project. The installation of signals will improve traffic flow and safety at this key intersection for Box Hill and Gables residents."

President of the Box Hill Nelson Progress Association Vicki Giannoulis said the upgrade is highly anticipated.



"This is a very busy intersection in Box Hill and I know many locals who will be relieved once the upgrade has been completed," Ms Giannoulis said.

"I would like to thank The Hills Shire Council for their efforts in getting this project approved."

The works will result in:

- New traffic lights
- road widening along Old Pitt Town Road
- 60m right turn lane on Fontana Drive to partially replace the existing median

- shoulder pavement and safety barriers on both sides of Old Pitt Town Road and
- new footpaths, street lighting, landscaping and relocation of services.

Construction will begin in early 2024. To stay up-to-date on the intersection upgrade of Old Pitt Town Road, Terry Road and Fontana Road, Box Hill, visit www.thehills.nsw.gov.au and search for 'Old Pitt Town Road, Fontana Drive, Terry Road Intersection Upgrade.'

FREE SUMMER SCHOOL HOLIDAY FUN!

Mini Putt Putt Golf

Enjoy a 9 hole course with friends!

Monday 15 and Tuesday 16 January
10am - 2pm daily

Located in front of Red Dollar

Make your very own Sand Buddy!

Fill your buddy with your favourite sand colours and pop on a hair colour to match!

Friday 19 and Saturday 20 January
10am - 1pm daily

Located in front of Red Dollar

Bookings not required, however parental supervision is necessary. Recommended for ages 4 years+.



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Proudly owned by



375-383 Windsor Road, Baulkham Hills

Waves will be jam-packed with Aussie entertainment, including:

- Splash-tastic inflatable obstacle course in the 50m pool
- Free sausage sizzle (2000 serves – first in, best dressed!)
- Funky beats from the DJ
- Roving entertainment
- And more!

Australia Day activities at Waves are **FREE**. Normal entry prices to Waves apply.



AUSTRALIA DAY AT WAVES

WAVES FITNESS & AQUATIC CENTRE

10AM – 3PM

44 Mileham Avenue,
Baulkham Hills

Join us at Waves on Australia Day for family fun and festivities!

FRIDAY
26
JAN



DOUBLE THE FUN THIS AUSTRALIA DAY WITH **TWO** ACTION-PACKED EVENTS!

AUSTRALIA DAY AT THE FARM

BELLA VISTA FARM

4.30PM – 9PM

Elizabeth Macarthur Drive, Bella Vista

Join us at Bella Vista Farm on Australia Day for family fun and festivities!

The Farm will be jam-packed with Aussie entertainment, including:

- Two live stages with performances from pop princess Samantha Jade, Dorothy the Dinosaur & Friends, Junkyard Beats, Tequila Mockingbird and community groups
- **FREE** activities and face painting
- Roving entertainment, rides, displays and stallholders
- Delicious street food from a range of food trucks
- A fantastic fireworks finale!

Bring a picnic blanket and celebrate our national day in the stunning heritage location at Bella Vista Farm.

Entry is **FREE** and parking is available onsite. Free shuttle bus services will run from Bella Vista Metro Station.



FAMILY FUN AT THE FARM AND WAVES FOR AUSTRALIA DAY



From pool party to festival of fun ... there is a lot to get excited about in the Hills this Australia Day with big events planned at both Bella Vista Farm and Waves Fitness and Aquatic Centre.

The festivities kick off with a massive Australia Day pool party at Waves, followed by fun for the whole family at Bella Vista Farm on Friday 26th January.

Pop sensation and X-Factor winner Samantha Jade (pictured) will headline the free Bella Vista Farm event, alongside performances by Junkyard Beats (see story page 27), Dorothy the Dinosaur & Friends as well as local performance groups.

Hills Shire Mayor Dr Peter Gangemi said he is looking forward to a fun-filled event that caters to the entire family.

"Australia is the greatest nation on Earth and we have so much to celebrate as a community on the 26th January," he said.

national day alongside our fellow residents at The Farm.

"Our diverse assortment of entertainment, food, rides and activities, capped off by fireworks will ensure there's something for everyone.

"Bella Vista Farm provides the perfect backdrop to celebrate our nation. Bring a picnic blanket and soak up the spirit of Australia Day in this stunning heritage location."

On the day there will also be a range of free activities, rides, and face painting for the kids before finishing with a spectacular fireworks display.

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Bushfire Threats! Prepared?

As a local in the Hawkesbury, I have personally seen the devastation of fires in our local area. Recent rain may have deferred the fire season but the threat is still very real and everyone must be prepared for when it hits.

Ace Ohlsson is an Aussie Pump Gold Distributor, they understands that the community needs to be prepared for our coming fire season.

Ace Ohlsson stock the Aussie Pumps' including Aussie Fire Chief. It has exceptional performance, it is lightweight and portable, and comes with a 5-year warranty. The Aussie Fire Chief is powered by a 5.5HP Honda engine which starts first time every time and the hydraulic design delivers 25% more performance than any similar pumps.

The Aussie Fire Chief has been praised farmers, homeowners, and even professional firefighters. This is the pump you want on your team.

Ace Ohlsson offers the full range of Aussie fire pumps and stocks hose kits to suit, so you leave ready to protect your home. Call them on 02 4571 6400.



The Ace Ohlsson Team (McGraths Hill) ready to assist with fire pump selection.

WAVES FITNESS AND AQUATIC CENTRE

10AM - 3PM

General admission prices still apply. A free sausage sizzle is available for the first 2000 people only. Limited parking is available onsite.

BELLA VISTA FARM

4.30PM - 9PM

Admission to the event is FREE. Parking will be available onsite; however, attendees are encouraged to utilise the Metro and the FREE shuttle bus service.

For more information, visit www.thehills.nsw.gov.au and search for 'Australia Day 2024'.

Stay updated on the latest news and announcements by following The Hills Shire Council on Facebook and Instagram.

There will be Flag raising ceremonies throughout the Shire on Friday, 26th January. Full Details on pages 16 and 17.

The Hills Shire Council will also be announcing its Citizens of the Year at a special afternoon tea event on Tuesday January 16th which will be featured in the next edition of the Hills to Hawkesbury Community News which is out on Australia Day.



Admission to the event is FREE. Parking will be available on-site, however residents are encouraged to utilise the Metro. Bella Vista Farm is a 15-minute walk from Bella Vista Metro Station, and there will be a shuttle bus service available from the Metro to The Farm approximately every ten minutes.

In addition to the celebrations at Bella Vista Farm, Council will also be offering a FREE Australia Day barbecue for the first 2000 members and visitors to attend Waves Fitness and Aquatic Centre between 10am – 3pm on Australia Day 26th January.

The pool party includes an inflatable obstacle course in the 50-metre Olympic-sized swimming pool, a DJ and roving performers.

"Not everyone has a backyard pool, but that doesn't mean that our residents should miss out on a poolside Australia Day party," said the Mayor.

"Our Australia Day barbecue at Waves will include a free sausage sizzle, a DJ spinning Aussie classics and inflatable fun in our 50-metre pool."

When to call NSW SES

FOR EMERGENCY HELP IN FLOOD, STORM AND TSUNAMI **132 500** **SES** NEW SOUTH WALES EMERGENCY SERVICE

Is anyone's life in danger?
 YES → Call Triple Zero (000)
 NO → Call NSW SES (132 500)

Are you seeking emergency help in a flood or storm because:
 YES → Your request for assistance will be logged by our 24/7 operations centre. A local volunteer may contact you for further details.
 NO → Depending on your situation you should:
 • Contact your insurer to make a claim or arrange permanent repairs.
 • Contact a professional tradesperson to repair damage or remove debris if required.

- A tree has fallen and caused structural damage to your home or vehicle?
- There is damage to your roof or it is leaking significantly?
- A tree or large branch has fallen and is preventing you from entering or leaving your home?
- Your property is flooded or about to flood?

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100,000 ENPHASE MICROINVERTERS INSTALLED 2023

Creative Activities

Creative Activities 2024
 First Term Commences February 7
 Wednesdays – 9.30am to 12noon

WANT TO LEARN A NEW (OR OLD) CRAFT ~ MEET NEW PEOPLE

86 Cecil Avenue, Castle Hill
 For information: Text 0416 077 291 or email: carolong4@gmail.com

Sharing Our Joy of Craft

At Creative Activities, on our last day for the year, we've traditionally brought in the things we've been working on throughout the year ~ paintings, knitting, crochet, cross stitching and the like, and show off our finished projects. Sadly, as with many things associated with COVID, we've had to postpone this for a few years but finally, at the end of November 2023, we got to share our creations with others. It was great to see the finished articles when we'd seen so many of them in progress! And what an excellent time to view things we might like to try in the future!

Creative Activities isn't just about craft, however! I think the backbone of this happy group of folk who meet each Wednesday (eight weeks per school term) is friendship. Some of our participants have been coming along each week for more than thirty years and it's their connection with those they craft alongside that keeps them coming back.

If you'd like to join our happy group of crafters, Term 1 for 2024 begins on February 7 in the hall at Castle Hill SDA church, 84 Cecil Avenue, Castle Hill – 9.30am if you'd like to try Tai Chi or 10.30am for the craft classes.

For more information, email Carolyn: carolong4@gmail.com or text: 0416 077 291



The Hills Shire Council News

Australia Day Flag Raising Ceremonies

There are several flag raising ceremonies taking place in the Hills on Australia Day, 26 January 2024.

Flag Raising Ceremony for Rotary Club of Castle Hill
From 8am to 9am at Heritage Park, Castle Hill.
The ceremony will go for 30 minutes followed by a light breakfast.

Flag Raising Ceremony for Annangrove Progress Association

From 11am to 11:30am at Annangrove Park, Annangrove.
The ceremony will go for 30 minutes followed by a BBQ.

Flag Raising Ceremony for Rotary Club of Kenthurst
From 9:30am to 10:30am at John Benyon Rotary Park, corner of Kenthurst Road and Nelson Road, Kenthurst.
The ceremony will go for 30 minutes followed by morning tea.

Joint Australia Day and India Republic Day Flag Raising Ceremony for Community Foundation of North Western Sydney

From 8am to 9am at Centenary of ANZAC Reserve, Castle Hill. The ceremony will go for 30 minutes followed by light snacks, including tea and coffee.

Start 2024 right by volunteering



Start the new year right by volunteering. It's a great way to meet new people, gain a new skill or simply try something new and get involved in your community.

Our volunteers cater for a range of sections including youth, aged and disability services, events, and environment at our Community Environment Centre, community nursery and via our several bushcare groups.

Hop on to Council's website and search 'volunteering' to find out more.

Recycle your holiday waste



With the festive season coming to a close and the new year swinging into action, start it right by correctly disposing of your holiday waste. See the table below on general items you can and can't recycle.

Recyclable	Not Recyclable
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christmas cards and paper wrapping• Cardboard boxes and junk mail• Plastic bottles and containers• Glass bottles and jars• Steel and aluminium cans and tins	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christmas lights• Artificial Christmas trees• Decorations, tinsel, foil and ribbons• Bon Bons• Toys and clothes• Plastic plates and cutlery• Polystyrene• Plastic bags and film

Top tip: Collapse cardboard and squash plastic bottles and aluminium cans before placing them in your recycling bin to save space.

If you have any questions regarding your bin collection, contact the Cleanaway Waste Hotline on 1800 623 895.

You may also donate goods to local op shops. However, if the op shop is closed or their donation bin is full, please don't leave any items outside; call ahead or wait for the bin to be emptied. Please also keep in mind: if you wouldn't give it to a mate, don't donate.

Council Meetings

Tuesday 6 February, 2024 – 7pm

For more information, visit www.thehills.nsw.gov.au and search for 'Meeting Agendas and Minutes.'



Enjoy a family day out on the Kellyville Circuit Metro Walk

If you're looking for a family-friendly activity this summer, pack a picnic and head out on the Hills Shire's newest Metro walk: The Kellyville Circuit – The Turkeys Nest Walk.

Starting at Kellyville Metro station, this 5.7km walk features paved paths suitable for prams and wheelchairs.

There are several spots to stop and rest along the way, including Caddies Creek Reserve, Beaumont Village Shopping Centre, Turkeys Nest Recreation Park and Barker Street Reserve.

Turkeys Nest Recreation Park is a perfect location for a picnic. The park was a dairy farm until the 1970s and features a large central pond and viewing platform, children's playground, picnic shelters, as well as cow statues and milk jugs that pay homage to the site's past and make for a great photo.

Once you're ready to head home, the walk takes you on a convenient loop along Strangers Creek, Windsor Road and then back to Kellyville Metro Station.

For avid green thumbs, there are opportunities to see a range of local flora along the way, including Ancient Forest Red Gums, River Flat Eucalyptus Forest and Red Gum Woodland.

To download the map and directions for the Kellyville Circuit and to explore the full range of bush walks and Metro walks, visit Council's website and search for 'Walks.'

Join our Disability and Inclusion Reference Group



Apply now to join Council's first-ever Disability and Inclusion Reference Group.

Membership of the panel will be open to a diverse cross-section of people living with a disability, their carers and experts in the field of disability, access and inclusion.

To submit your Expression of Interest for the Disability and Inclusion Reference group, head to Council's website and search for 'Disability.' Expressions of Interest close on Friday 23 February 2024.



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The Hills Shire Council News?
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Terms & Conditions: Free delivery only available for Beulahm Hills delivery suburbs. Manooch Pizzeria own all rights to this promotion. For limited time only



The Galston Club is a great venue for meeting friends to celebrate those special occasions... and it's about to get even better!

The Galston Club has always been a 'go to' venue for indoor and outdoor dining, and food that tantalises your tastebuds. But soon they will be opening a brand new renovated alfresco area... plus an extended covered playground, which will be just perfect for families.

For now though, they have some amazing food specials on offer... and we're certain that you will love them:

- Sunday / Monday – Kids Eat Free.
- Monday to Friday – Senior's Lunch Specials.
- Monday to Friday – Lunch Specials.
- Monday Night – Burger Special.
- Tuesday – Barramundi Night.
- Thursday – Schnitzel Night.
- Friday – Pork Rib Night.
- Saturday – Pasta Night.

They hold regular events such as Meat & Veg Raffles (Wed and Fri nights), plus their Members Badge Draw.

Looking at booking a function? Contact their friendly staff to enquire about their room hire and function packages.

So why not drop by and grab a bite to eat, and watch the upcoming renovations evolve?

For more information, please view their socials – Facebook & Instagram, or their website www.galstonclub.com.au or call 9653 2017

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LONE STAR RIB HOUSE & BREWS

\$17 WEEKDAY CLUB

MONDAY - THURSDAY

Dine-In Only

MONDAYS

- PESTO CHICKEN FETTUCCINI
- MEATBALL PASTA

TUESDAYS

- CHEESE BURGER & FRIES
- FRIED CHICKEN BURGER & FRIES
- VEGETARIAN BURGER & FRIES

WEDNESDAYS

- CHICKEN SCHNITZEL & FRIES
- MUSHROOM SCHNITZEL & FRIES
- CHICKEN PARMIGIANA & FRIES

THURSDAYS

- BATTERED FISH & FRIES

T&CS APPLY. AVAILABLE FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY AT PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS. NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR DISCOUNT. DINE-IN ONLY.





Veterans Remembered

Just over a year ago, CHRG (Castle Hill RSL Group) launched a new Veteran Service Member card for current and retired service people who are club members.

The VSM card entitles holders to special group promotions over four clubs - Castle Hill RSL Club, Castle Hill Bowling Club, Club Parramatta and Lynwood Country Club.

It also highlights to the staff members that cardholders have served their country and is a way for CHRG to acknowledge and respect their service.

At the time David O'Neil, Group CEO said "This card will not only immediately identify our Veteran Service Members who have served for their country, but it will also provide an array of member benefits and access to promotions and events across our Group."

Throughout the year, Veteran Service Member cardholders have been treated to a range of discount and offerings such as complimentary aqua aerobics classes, food and beverage vouchers, free use of the new golf simulator at Lynwood Golf and Country Club, social darts and a morning tea catch up, discounted tickets to shows, free bowls lessons and much more.

CHRG's Veteran Service member card has further cemented the Group's commitment

to Veteran welfare and support by providing eligible members with a sense of connectivity, community and belonging.

VSM holder Chris Kirk said: "I like the Veteran Service Member Card because it gives me a sense of being thought of. When you serve in the armed forces you don't do it for the accolades or to be treated any differently, but it does feel good to be recognised for our service and sacrifice."

Ann O'Connor said she finds the special promotions very good. "It also shows respect for the people who have served their country (and) helps to highlight the difference between the Club and the Castle Hill & District RSL sub-Branch.

Paul Harris - Walker said regular emails advise members about promotions and the wide variety of club activities to VSM holders. "Most importantly, the scheme provides the opportunity for like minded members with similar outlooks to engage in camaraderie."

For more information about a VSM card email info@chrg.com.au or call reception at: Castle Hill RSL Club: 02 8858 4800, Club Parramatta: 02 8865 5100 or Lynwood Country Club: 02 4580 2800

On Australia Day Castle Hill RSL Sub-branch members will be planting Australian flags next to the memorials of Australian and Allied veterans.

The flag planting, held in conjunction with Castlebrook Memorial Garden Rouse Hill, began in 2009 with 600 flags. Since then it has grown with family, friends and members of the public joining sub-Branch members to plant nearly 1,000 flags.

Flag planting will be held at Castle Hill Cemetery in Gilbert Road, between 6am and 6.45am on Friday January 26th. It will be followed by the service at Castlebrook Memorial Park, Windsor Road at 7am which includes flag raising.

It will be supported by Squadron 336 Air Cadets Catafalque party, with music provided by North Ryde RSL Pipe band. Castle Hill & District RSL sub-Branch President, Cheryl Hill will give the address before volunteers move off in teams to plant flags. The Castlebrook Memorial Gardens will host a breakfast BBQ to conclude the event.

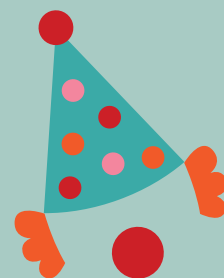
IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO
GET YOUR TICKETS FOR OUR

SCHOOL HOLIDAY

Workshops



BEADED BAG BLING &
CLOWN YOURSELF WORKSHOPS




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RSL CLUB
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lynwoodcc.com.au

- CLUB -
PARRAMATTA
clubparramatta.com.au

Empowering Lives, Delivering Freshness!

Established in 2022 Ben & Jimbo's "Delivery with Ability" is a social enterprise with a heart.

Introducing a unique initiative where individuals with disabilities are not just service providers, but also empowered entrepreneurs running their own fresh produce delivery service... they have witnessed the transformative power of employment—building skills, boosting confidence, and enhancing the overall quality of life.

At Ben & Jimbo's, they believe in creating a ripple effect of positive change. Their model goes beyond delivering fresh produce; it's about fostering employment



opportunities, providing mentorship, and creating valuable social interactions for individuals with disabilities.

In collaboration with MD Fresh, they proudly serve the Sydney Metropolitan Area. Their partnerships with esteemed suppliers such as Nati Bros Roses and Infinity Bakery ensure that customers receive not only the freshest produce, but also support local businesses committed to quality and sustainability.

Ben & Jimbo's commitment to the environment is reflected in their thoughtfully curated boxes. Partnering with MD Fresh allows them to reduce unnecessary packaging, therefore contributing to a greener tomorrow. You can enjoy the highest quality produce, at a remarkably competitive cost... while making a positive impact on the community.

By choosing Ben & Jimbo's "Delivery with Ability", you're not just receiving a box of fresh produce; you are becoming a part of a movement. A movement that celebrates

Ben & Jimbo's "Delivery with Ability" - Where Every Delivery Tells a Story of Empowerment!



diversity, inclusivity, and the beauty of empowering every individual to reach their full potential.

ORDER YOUR BOX TODAY!

Visit www.deliverywithability.com.au and make a difference in your community. By growing Ben & Jimbo's you can help provide more people with a disability employment and independence.

Ben & Jimbo's ESTD 2022
DELIVERY WITH ABILITY

A New Year brings NEW opportunities!



As you start a New Year, why not consider learning a new skill or connecting with new friends. Learning in The Hills, a leisure learning program under the arm of Hills Community Aid, is excited to welcome a new tutor, Marwa Abouzeid who will teach Ukulele for Beginners as part of our 2024 Term calendar starting in February. Marwa says "Join me for a harmonious Ukulele journey. Embrace the joy of creating music in a fun, friendly setting with fellow adults. Learn to play melodies, master chords, and sing along with new friends. Let the ukulele be your guide to a world of musical bliss!" Classes are \$95 for 9 weeks with the option to rent a ukulele from the tutor for an additional fee.

Learning in The Hills offers around 50 weekly classes from our Baulkham Hills location including Yoga, Meditation, Dressmaking, Tai Chi, Painting, Crafts, Researching your Family History, Friendship Group and much more! For information scan the QR code to visit our website program or call 96397918.



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PETS OF THE WEEK

BY BEV JORDAN

The influx over the holiday season has forced the closure of Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter which started the 2024 New Year at capacity.

In a 2 week period over Christmas and New Year more than 100 animals arrived needing shelter.

Hawkesbury currently has 64 dogs (46 are available for adoption) and 52 cats (4 available for adoption as the rest are strays waiting to be reclaimed or are on hold).

Andrew Kearns, Acting Director City Planning said 45 dogs and 56 cats arrived at the Shelter just before Christmas (22nd December) and 5th January.

Luckily 10 dogs have since been reunited with their owners, 22 dogs were adopted and 11 were sent to rescue groups.

During the same period 52 cats were adopted.

"If stray animals are found, we encourage the finder to take them to their local vet clinic to scan for a microchip in a bid to reunite them with their owner," he said.

"The shelter is always in need of towels and blankets. Cat toys would be great given that it's kitten season."

Hawkesbury City Mayor Sarah McMahon said: "The success of our Companion Animal Shelter is very much a partnership with the community. There's so much everyone can do – including adopting a cat or dog and giving them a second chance and a loving home."

"Right now, our shelter is full of great dogs and cats that would make a wonderful addition to any family. Residents also play a part in making sure their pets are desexed, registered and microchipped. That way we can return lost pets to their families quickly, and local pet populations are managed responsibly."

Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter is at 10 Mulgrave Road, Mulgrave. Call 4560 4644 or visit Hawkesbury City Council's Facebook page www.facebook.com/hawkesburycitycouncil

Hawkesbury Council's Rehoming Organisation Number is R251000145

SIX OF THE BEST



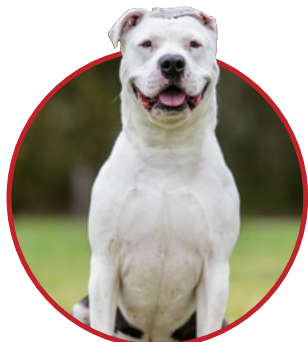
HARLO

Male, 1 year 6 months, American staffy
Harlo has been waiting over 5 months for a home, for some reason this lovely boy keeps getting overlooked. Harlo can sit when asked, he shakes hands and walks well on lead. Harlo craves attention from his carers and has also been gentle with children he has met while at the shelter. Harlo will need a home with active owners that can take him on a daily walk and keep up with his energy levels.



JAX

Male, 7 years, American staffy
Jax is a vibrant, happy guy and at 7 years of age, he certainly still has a lot of life to live. Jax will be happy with a daily walk, treats and of course lots of love. He has been social towards other dogs while enjoying his time in the exercise yard. Jax is already desexed so he can leave the shelter with you.



COOPER

Male, 4 years, American staffy
Cooper is a lovely well behaved boy who has been great towards the other dogs enjoying his play time in the exercise yard. Cooper loves going for walks and loves nothing more than being allowed to hang out with you.

MEDUSA

Female, 5 years, American staffy
Medusa has been such a pleasure to look after while she has been at the shelter, but now it is time to find her a loving home! With a gorgeous staffy smile, a fun and vibrant personality, Medusa could be the perfect fit for your family.

ÉCLAIR

Female, 1 year 6 months, American staffy
Éclair loves nothing more than playing with water, especially from the hose as we fill her water. She would love her forever human to love water just like she does, someone who will let her embrace her inner mermaid and play with water to her heart's content. Éclair is a very friendly girl, who will happily let you know of her presence with some loud noises and crazy body wiggles!

LARA

Female, 5 years, Bull/arab mix
Lara is a sweet girl who has been friendly towards the other dogs and has been very well behaved for the staff. Lara is already desexed so she can leave the shelter with you.



*If you are interested in meeting any of the dogs, please come to the shelter with your family dog and the children to meet them so that staff can be sure they are all going to get on well together.

Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter is at 10 Mulgrave Road, Mulgrave. Call 4560 4644 or visit Hawkesbury City Council's Facebook page www.facebook.com/hawkesburycitycouncil. Hawkesbury Council's Rehoming Organisation Number is R251000145

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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🏠 Level 1, Suite 101C, 130 Main Street, Blacktown

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✉ Michelle.rowland.MP@aph.gov.au

🌐 michellerowland.com.au

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



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Albanese Government breaks job creation record

We know a lot of people are doing it tough right now dealing with the cost of living.

That's why we're doing everything we can to get wages moving.

We are only halfway through our term, and we've already created more jobs than any other first term government on record at 624,000 new jobs.

October's ABS Labour Force Figures show

- Employment increased by 55,000 – exceeding all market expectations.
- Female employment increased by 37,500.
- Importantly, female full-time employment increased by 26,200 in October, to a record high

of 3,867,000, and is now 144,600 (or 3.9 per cent) higher than it was a year ago.

- The participation rate increased to 67 per cent, returning to the record high it hit in August this year.
- The female participation rate is at an all-time high of 62.8 per cent.

However, there's still more work to do.

This month the Albanese Government passed the Closing Loopholes Bill.

The Bill will criminalise wage theft, and close labour hire loopholes that mean Australians doing the exact same job are being paid different rates of pay.

On top of this, our focus to ease the cost of living for Australians has remained steadfast. It's our top priority. We are delivering \$23 billion in targeted relief, while not adding to inflation.

This includes:

- Electricity bill relief
- Making medicines cheaper
- Making it easier and cheaper to see a doctor
- Cheaper child care and expanding parental leave
- Building more social and affordable homes and increasing rent assistance
- Fee-free TAFE
- Wages rising for fastest rate for a decade – including for minimum wage and aged care workers.

But the job isn't done, and the Albanese Government is working every day to deliver a Better Future for Australians.

Happy New Year

The start of each New Year is a time to reflect on the year just past, and make plans for the future. Given how challenging 2023 has been, it feels especially important to express our hopes and dreams for better days ahead for us all.

So Happy New Year Kellyville! Wishing you a happy, safe and healthy 2024.

World First - Accessible Checkout Unveiled By Woolworths

In what is believed to be a world first, Woolworths has unveiled an accessible checkout, designed specifically for team members living with a physical disability, including people who use wheelchairs and other mobility aids such as walkers. The first groceries were scanned at the innovative checkout on the 6th of December at the opening of Woolworths' new Kellyville Grove store, and it was such an honour to be a part of this momentous day! During my tenure as the NSW Minister for Disability Services, we

put great focus on creating new employment opportunities for people who use a wheelchair or live with other physical disabilities. So it was great to see how Woolworths has led the way by creating opportunities for participation and found a solution for those who have difficulty with shopping checkout. It was also great to catch up with Geoff Trappett who is Woolworth's Diversity and Inclusion Lead; and to meet the lads from Our Lady of the Rosary school choir who sang the national anthem.

Well done Woolworths! Truly inspiring!



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Ray Williams MP

Member for Kellyville



As your State MP, I am here to:

- Help you with any State matters.
- Provide Justice of the Peace services.
- Arrange congratulatory messages.
- Assist in accessing NSW Government services, assistance or grants.

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New plaque at John Benyon Rotary Park honours Vietnam Veterans

Kenthurst Rotary Club hosted an unveiling of a new plaque in John Benyon Rotary Park to honour the service of Kenthurst and Annangrove locals who participated in the Vietnam War (1962 – 1973).

The plaque is located alongside other plaques in the Rotary Park, honouring soldiers who fought in the two World Wars, Korea, Malaya, and Vietnam, as well as those involved in UN Peacekeeping.

The plaque includes the list of Kenthurst and Annangrove locals who served in Vietnam: Major James Allan Birch and Warrant Officer Class 2 Allan Roy Johnston from the Regular Army, and Private-Army Conscript Ronald Richard Prager.

More than 50 people, which included members of the local community, Rotary members, and family and friends of those honoured by the plaque, some of whom had travelled from Queensland, attended the event. Federal Member for Berowra Julian Leeser MP, Mayor of the Hills Shire Dr Peter Gangemi, and other local councillors attended the unveiling ceremony.

Julian Leeser MP reflected on the importance of this unveiling ceremony: "It was



wonderful to see the Kenthurst and Annangrove communities, alongside the families of those who fought in Vietnam, come together on this important occasion."

"It was also fitting that the ceremony was held soon after Remembrance Day, when we take time to remember all those who have fought and died in the protection of our country."

One of the Directors of the Kenthurst Rotary Club, Paul Rapp, organised the event and emphasised its significance for the community: "The Vietnam plaque placement on our memorial at the John Benyon Rotary Park was long overdue. We must honour all soldiers who came from Kenthurst to fight for our country in all wars."

"Malcom Johnston was the driver behind the establishment of this plaque, as his brother was one of the soldiers who went to Vietnam. Without Malcolm's drive, the contribution of our local soldiers would still be forgotten."

POLITICAL PAID CONTENT

Celebrating Australia Day

Australia is the best country in the world.

Every year, Australia Day gives us an opportunity to celebrate Australia and being Australian.

Australia Day is a day of beginnings – about how the Australia that we know and love today has come to be. It is a chance for all of us to reflect on how our families came to be here.

As Noel Pearson has rightly said, there are three parts of our national story: our Indigenous heritage, our British inheritance, and our multicultural success.

Australia Day is a chance to celebrate these three strands of our society, and in particular to reflect on the arrival of the First Fleet, which brought with it many of the British institutions which are so central to Australian life today – our system of Parliamentary democracy, the rule of law, property rights, and the right to vote.

Our unique Australian sense of humour is a mix of the British and the Irish, and the British gave us a language that connects us to English-

speaking people in every continent around the world.

As Australians, we have hand-picked the best bits of British culture (while rejecting the class system which holds Britain back) to create the exceptional Australia which is so dear to each of us today.

To everyone across the electorate,
I am wishing you a very happy Australia Day!

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As your Federal Member, I am here to:

↪ Assist with accessing Federal Government services

↪ Attend your local community event

↪ Arrange congratulatory messages

Please contact my office if I can be of assistance.



JULIAN LEESER MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR BEROWRA

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Authorised by Julian Leeser MP, Liberal Party of Australia, Level 11, 423 Pennant Hills Road, Pennant Hills NSW 2120.

FROM MOTOR CYCLES TO OPERA

A HARD ACT TO FOLLOW

At the last meeting of the Hills Friendship Club for 2023, long-time member, ninety-year-old, Lester Morris launched his book "If People Had Tails", the latest in a long list of published works. This latest book is one of his children's books, well written and beautifully illustrated by Josie Granger.

Lester, a resident of Winston Hills, has had a varied and interesting life, starting work in the mid-1940s as a messenger boy delivering telegrams at Kings Cross and selling newspapers. He saved the money earned to purchase his first motor bike, a 1929 Norton, in 1947 as a 14-year-old schoolboy and from that developed his love of motorcycles. Motorbikes had a grip on him and never let him go. He went on to study motorcycles and became somewhat an expert on their design and suspension which led to his employment in the trade working for up to six motorcycle companies and becoming a columnist for the Motor Cycle Magazine in 1967 for whom he wrote for 20 odd years. Lester Morris is Australia's longest-serving, and probably most published, specialist motorcycle writer, with most of his peers considering him to be 'iconic', or even 'legendary'.

His first articles, on simple maintenance and safety, were published in REVS Motorcycle News in 1968. His Two Wheels work encompassed four decades and included road tests of contemporary and classic bikes and sparkling autobiographical accounts of long rides as a young man in the 1950s with his mates, including the equally legendary, and pretty scary, Fred, on his Vincent.

From 1948 Lester spent over 20 years in the trade, including working at Sydney's famed

Omodeis store. His first book, Motorcycling in Australia, was published by McMillan in 1976.

Lester is also a noted race commentator, often featuring as an expert motorcycle compere on Torque, a 1970s motoring programme on ABC television. His race commentary from Mount Panorama at Bathurst was often broadcast on Sydney radio station 2GB.

One of his books on his past experiences, "Vintage Morris: Tall Tales but True from a Lifetime in Motorcycling" is just that, a memoir of his many-and-various (and often hilarious) experiences in the motorcycle industry.

Motor cycling is not his only interest. Lester also has worked on stage and television having appeared in many Australian TV shows such as "Home and Away" and "Sons and Daughters". He appeared in a commercial for Energy Australia which proved so popular that the company followed it up with Lester appearing in eight different commercials playing the same character. Lester's screen credits also include appearances in Mission: Impossible II, Danny Deckchair and Police Rescue.

As a member of Actors' Equity since 1968, he appeared initially in TV drama, then on-tour with J.C. Williamson's with the musical 'Mame', "Two Gentlemen of Verona" and later as Mr. Buckle in "The Shoemaker and the Elves" for

the Alexander Theatre Company in 1974, before founding, directing and appearing in Music Hall in 1975, which returned to Sydney in 1977.

He has also Played the King in "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Live! On Stage!" from 1985 and directed a production of 'Snow White' which played Sydney and toured

Australia and New Zealand several times since 1999.

A trained opera singer, actor and stage director, he also formed the 'Piccadilly Music Hall' which toured the Eastern Seaboard of Australia for more than 30 years, playing three Theatre Restaurant venues, and countless Clubs, Town Halls and Theatres, including a sell-out in Sydney Town Hall, then playing, five months later, to audience of four (4) in Outback Queensland. "No publicity, that's why!" according to Lester.

He later directed several plays for the Gaels Company and the Operas 'Iolanthe', 'Love by Lanternlight', 'Gianni Schicchi' for Rockdale and Sydney Independent Opera companies, among others.

Lester was honoured at the Hills Friendship Club meeting at Castle Hill in December with a presentation to him and his wife, Lyn, of a certificate celebrating their 10-year membership of the Friendship Club.



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AREA DURING PAST DECADES.



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Photos of Lester Morris and
some of his published books

Thompson writes a piece of Nadal's history

Hills ace Jordan Thompson could go down in the record books as the last player to defeat Rafael Nadal in Australia if the legendary Spaniard stays away after his latest injury.

Thompson, 29, stunned Nadal 5-7, 7-6 (8/6), 6-3 in an epic quarterfinal of the Brisbane International last week, giving the Hills star his biggest scalp in his impressive tennis career.

Thompson, who has a string of big victories over the years, saved three match points in toppling Nadal, and leapt eight places in the world rankings to 47.

The former Oakhill College student (class of 2012) will be one of the local hopes at

the Australian Open which starts on Sunday, January 14.

Nadal, who skipped most of 2023 after injuring his hip at the Australian Open, said he has a micro tear on a muscle and was going back to Spain for treatment.

"I think he (Thompson) played a good match," Nadal said. "For me, it was not the best match, I had a lot of opportunities to win it. I need to accept that. After a year (of not playing), that's normal."

Thompson had never taken a set off the 22-Grand Slam winning Spaniard in their previous two encounters, saying it was amazing to defeat one of his idols.

"That was something special," Thompson said. "I forgot I saved match points but to beat Rafa in Brissy at home and it's my first semifinal on a hardcourt, I couldn't be happier.

"I completely forgot I saved match points. He was one of my idols growing up. I loved Lleyton (Hewitt), Andy Murray (he toppled Murray in 2017), loved Rafa. It was special to share the court again and to take him down was a whole other feeling."

Thompson thanked the crowd for their support: "You guys got me through it.... That was something special."



Jordan Thompson celebrates one of his finest wins. Picture courtesy Tennis NSW Facebook

Thompson hit 47 winners against Nadal's 38 with one less unforced error than his opponent's 29.

Unfortunately, Thompson could not repeat his heroics in the semifinal where he was defeated by second seed and eventual champion Grigor Dimitrov of Bulgaria 6-3, 7-5.

The right-handed Thompson is coached by Peter Luczak, and is one of the most talented and hard working Australians on the ATP Tour. Having started playing tennis aged four, his first coach was his Dad Stephen. He would have been a rugby league player if he hadn't succeeded in tennis, which has so far earned him more than \$5 million.

Thompson and fellow Australian Max Purcell also made it to the doubles semifinals of the Brisbane International, making it a near perfect warmup for the Australian Open.



Rafael Nadal and Jordan Thompson after their epic quarterfinal. Picture courtesy Tennis NSW Facebook

Spreading AFL cheer in Tiwi Islands

Players from Baulkham Hills Hawks AFL Club and the Parramatta Goannas have spread a lot of goodwill while showcasing their skills during a recent trip with South Melbourne Districts FC to Tiwi Islands near Darwin.

The South Melbourne club ran an AFL coaching clinic and played two friendly matches against local teams, making new friends and adding to their experience. The visitors won their games against St Marys FC and the Darwin Buffalos. They learned a lot as it was played at a faster level in hot and humid conditions.

Promising AFL player Evan Custovic represented two clubs, Baulkham Hills Hawks and Parramatta Goannas AFL, who teamed up with the South Melbourne Districts FC.

The boys ran the AFL clinic for the students at the Murrupurtianuwu Catholic Primary School, with everyone enjoying the rich experience.

In 2023, the Hawks were part of a joint venture with the Parramatta Goanna Youth Football Alliance for the U15-U17 age group. They had a successful season, making it to the grand finals.

Michael Bright, the Parramatta Goannas president, liaised with South Melbourne for this trip. This was the first time that the Goannas

had travelled interstate for the sport. The other Parramatta Goanna players were Coby Bright, Mark Mifsud, Finn Kelly, and Keiran Arnott.

This is the third annual trip that the SMDFC have organised to Darwin as they spread the popularity of footy.

Evan, who starts Year 11 at Castle Hill High School in 2024, has been with the Hawks since the under-8s and plays for the U16/17 team. He said he loved the lifestyle up there, being so laid back.

The Hawks, established in 1976, have a strong junior base and have won many premierships over the years.

The Tiwi Islands are part of the Northern Territory, 80 km to the north of Darwin, adjoining the Timor Sea.



South Melbourne Districts FC (red & white jerseys) and St Mary's players after their game

Environmentally Friendly Fun on Australia Day

BY JOSH KERWICK

Sustainable performance troupe Junkyard Beats will take the stage at the Hills Shire Council's Australia Day event at Bella Vista Farm, where they'll be providing a family friendly and all-around fun performance with instruments made out of recycled materials.

Creator of Junkyard Beats Oded Prior gave Hills to Hawkesbury Community News an idea of what local residents could expect from the performance: "It's gonna be a big, proper show - our first of 2024. We're going to be premiering a bunch of new material that we've been working on in the past six months and never tried before."

"It's been a bit of a strange time in the world, and we just want to bring back the entertainment, the fun, the creativity, and hopefully inspire kids and adults to reuse, reduce and recycle as much as they can through music!"

Oded began Junkyard Beats in 2015 after years of fascination with non-traditional percussion instruments. "As a drummer, I've never really felt comfortable just sitting and drumming on the back of a stage," he says. "I've always loved collecting things and bringing them home to give them a new purpose, reusing them for different things. With Junkyard Beats, we combine drumming, rhythm, movement and comedy with junk percussion to turn it into an all-at-once kind of style."

Watching a show from the performance troupe, the energy and showmanship of Junkyard Beats is genuinely infectious. Their unique mixture of dance, percussion and audience interaction makes for a show that the whole family can enjoy. Oded says: "I always tell people to bring your grandkids and your grandmother; it really works from 5 to 85 years old!"

Though you'll be finding it hard to keep from tapping your foot to the energetic rhythm that Junkyard Beats bring, they'll also be teaching kids and adults alike an important message about the value of recycling. He says: "We live by the words 'One person's trash is another person's treasure,' and we really try to encourage this."



Oded Prior (furthest right) with the Junkyard Beats ensemble

Bella Vista Farm

CELEBRATIONS AT THE FARM 26 JANUARY

Bella Vista Farm once again provides the perfect backdrop to celebrate the spirit of Australia on 26th January in its beautiful heritage location. Come with a picnic, enjoy a range of free activities, face painting for the kids, performances by pop sensation Samantha Jade alongside performances by Junkyard Beats, Dorothy the Dinosaur & Friends as well as local performance groups. A spectacular fireworks display will finalise the festivities. Bella Vista Farm is open from 4.30pm - 9pm. The Friends of Bella Vista Farm will be in attendance to serve delicious Devonshire Teas and the well-stocked Trash and Treasure Stall will be in operation. Come up to the farmhouse and meet Ann spinning wool in the traditional way, meet the Friends and learn more about the farm. Admission to the event is FREE. Parking will be available onsite. However, attendees are encouraged to utilise the Metro and the FREE shuttle bus service which will run between the Metro and Bella Vista Farm.



FIRST OPEN DAY FOR 2024

On Sunday 4th February, Bella Vista Farm's first Open Day for the year will begin - offering tours of the house, traditional wool spinning, music in the gardens, popular sausage sizzle and onions, Devonshire Teas. A festive and beautiful ambience gives delight to visitors' Sunday experience. Open from 9am-2pm the first Sunday throughout the year (except January). Come and learn a bit of Aussie history and meet the Friends who help to keep the farm alive and maintained. A gold coin donation is required for the house tour. We look forward to greeting you. Corner Elizabeth Macarthur Drive and Norwest Boulevard, Bella Vista.

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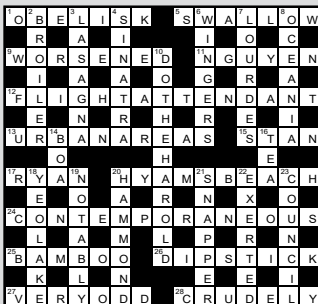
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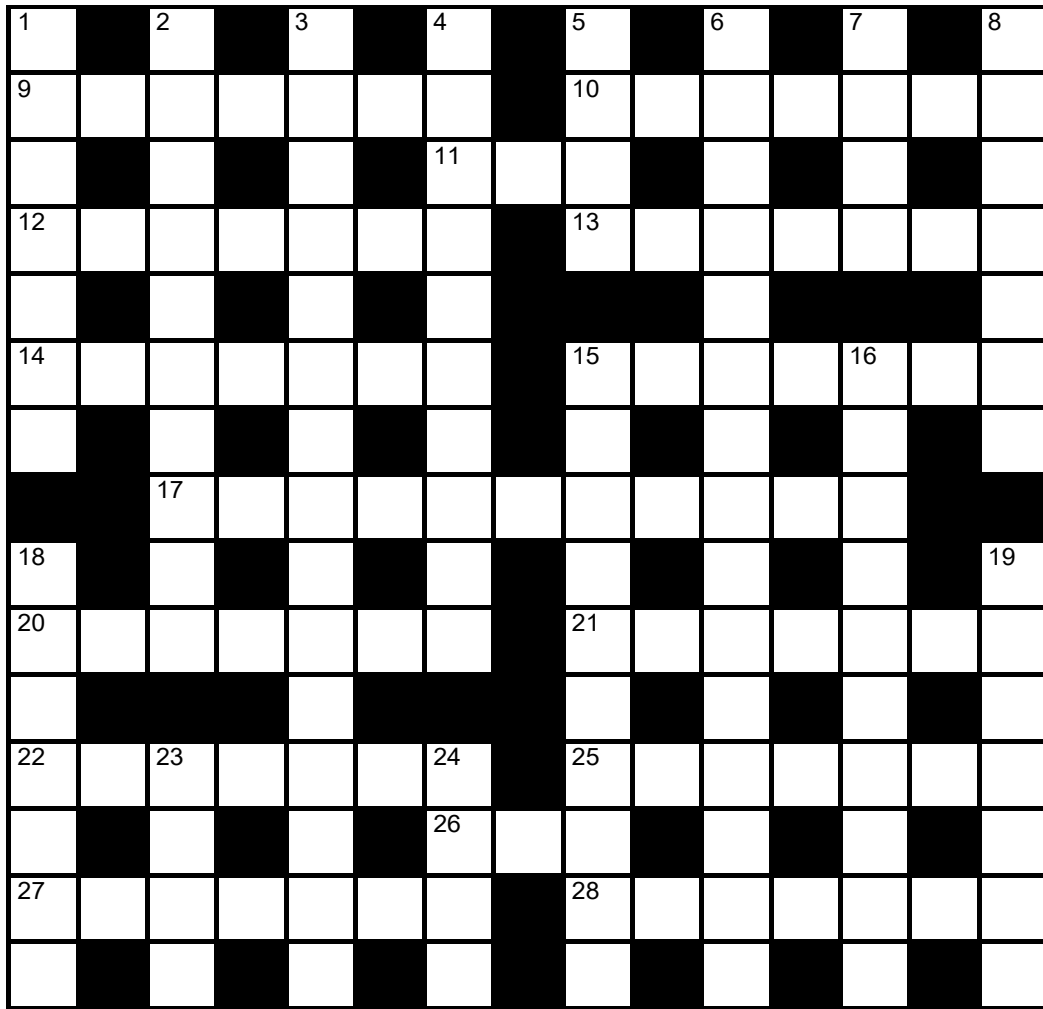
Answers from last issue

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU

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



Across

9. Swaggering show
10. Small carnivorous marsupial of the south
11. Go a few rounds
12. Fords from the end of the last millennium
13. Ailing while sailing
14. African tongue
15. They're hooked
17. Stir enough tar or get a distinction (5, 6)
20. Loser (4-3)
21. Drink cooler (3, 4)
22. Ornate wardrobe cabinet
25. Fascinate
26. Pillage
27. Swag
28. Bludgers

Down

1. Inflammation
2. Oil alternative (7, 3)
3. Periodical item (8, 7)
4. Footballer who won the Brownlow Medal three times (3, 7)
5. "Original Sin" band
6. Tiny central Australian nocturnal flyer (6, 6, 3)
7. Indonesian resort island
8. Like the interior of a medium steak
15. Loathsome
16. Diffused cacti ruled out
18. One revered in India
19. He looks down in the mouth
23. Dust speck
24. They're shorter than eons

Hills to Hawkesbury Community News

Collect at the **Panthers Club** in North Richmond your copy of **Hills to Hawkesbury Community News**

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WORD SEARCH ANNIVERSARY GIFTS

R	U	B	Y	H	L	A	C	E	S	U	R	C	B	S
I	F	W	R	E	V	L	I	S	S	N	O	R	I	Z
A	N	E	S	R	E	H	T	A	E	L	P	V	C	R
N	H	U	C	O	L	E	E	T	S	K	O	V	C	A
I	L	E	H	Q	L	I	N	E	N	R	A	S	J	L
H	M	J	M	O	A	I	E	R	Y	Y	Y	C	C	Q
C	T	A	P	E	A	R	L	D	B	S	E	O	D	N
A	S	F	X	R	R	V	P	R	A	L	X	T	I	P
O	C	C	K	E	M	A	Q	E	A	J	I	T	A	N
B	S	T	O	P	M	L	L	T	W	R	E	O	M	G
A	O	U	S	A	A	F	S	D	S	R	Z	N	O	O
Q	T	M	Z	P	O	Y	O	U	U	C	N	O	N	L
R	W	N	I	L	R	P	R	A	R	J	O	R	D	D
Z	X	F	B	C	W	O	O	D	Z	T	R	D	T	D
O	R	H	Q	R	X	C	O	R	A	L	B	U	X	X

BRONZE
CHINA
CORAL
COTTON
CRYSTAL

DIAMOND
EMERALD
GOLD
IRON
IVORY

JADE
LACE
LEATHER
LINEN
PAPER

PEARL
RUBY
SILVER
STEEL
WOOD

Answers from last issue

WORD SEARCH

D	O	S	M	B	O	L	E	R	O	A	S	P	P	M
S	N	G	A	V	E	N	E	N	I	U	G	E	B	R
A	K	O	U	M	X	C	R	Y	T	U	O	T	B	V
L	C	G	J	B	B	E	N	O	B	A	G	S	L	P
S	H	N	E	T	R	A	K	A	H	O	N	O	R	H
A	A	A	C	Q	C	E	L	D	D	R	A	W	U	H
X	C	D	N	O	M	L	T	M	Z	N	T	T	W	M
M	H	N	A	A	E	B	A	T	J	L	R	U	B	D
A	A	A	D	T	I	M	Z	L	I	O	N	A	A	N
L	T	F	K	S	B	I	S	A	V	J	N	B	I	L
B	D	Y	A	O	I	W	T	O	R	T	X	O	F	L
R	S	J	E	A	A	J	F	F	E	V	I	J	Z	U
A	M	P	R	Q	U	I	C	K	S	T	E	P	N	B
T	A	Z	B	O	C	N	E	M	A	L	F	R	R	T
T	X	O	P	X	R	E	U	G	N	E	R	E	M	P

CODE WORD

T	A	C	T	I	C	A	L	A	P	S	E	
U	L	N	D	C	R	L						
S	L	O	P	E	S	O	Z	O	N	E		
K	G	X	O	N	L	V						
			A	T	T	R	A	C	T	I	V	E
P	D	R	B	E	F	N						
O	R	I	G	I	N	U	P	L	I	F	T	
L	S	C	J	T	C	H						
L	O	Q	U	A	C	I	O	U	S			
U	U	B	G	A	M	A						
T	W	I	L	L	G	L	E	A	K	S		
E	E	E	L	L	U	P						
S	I	T	E	R	E	C	Y	C	L	E	S	

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

2	20	1	23	12	23	1	4		13	1	14	8
7		19		19		21			2		21	
2	9	2	23	8		17	19	26	2	15	19	13
17		13		19		22			23		23	
		19		6		14	25	11	1	19	19	8
11	19	17	5	14	25	19		17		13		19
19				19				2			13	
16		10		26		26	21	20	14	13	1	13
23	3	19	24	2	8	2		1		20		
9		2				25		23		18		26
17	2	12	23	21	26	23		20	17	19	16	21
19		19				8		19		25		26
19	2	17	26		18	2	17	16	24	2	26	26

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
			Y			J						
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
												L

SUDOKU

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

Rating: ★ ★ ★ ★ ☆

		9			8	7				2
		5								6
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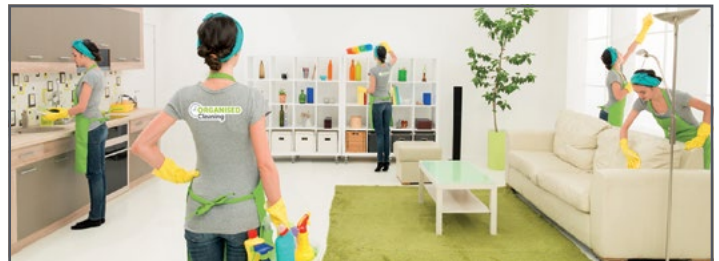
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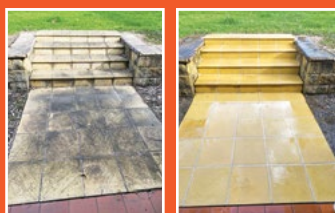
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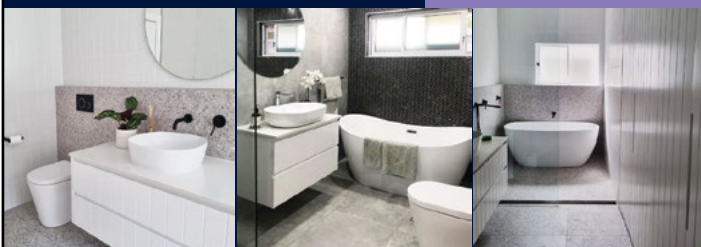
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