

# Hills to Hawkesbury

Community News | 24th Jan – 07th Feb 2025 | Volume 42 – Issue 02  
Local Stories, Local Events, Local People and Local Businesses

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# The Nurtured Village Celebrates a Year of Operations

BY LANCE ZAFE

A growing number of mums found a shoulder to lean on in The Nurtured Village as the charity celebrates another successful year of operations.

Since 2019, the Brisbane initiative, which was founded not only as a mental health support system for mums but also to address the gap in 'the traditional village of support' during early parenthood, has grown into more than 20 locations in NSW, QLD, Victoria, and Western Australia. It branched out into The Hills in January 2024, reaching local mums in need of food, formula, and fellowship.

This year, The Hills District branch and its members banded together for an initiative to create assistance for a family that suffered a complete loss due to a house fire.

The local Hills coordinator, Andrea Pateman, and Mr Alex Hawke MP met in June. Mr Hawke articulated his support for the charity's different initiatives. They discussed the charity's impact in light of the ongoing cost-of-living crisis and its efforts to enhance its members' mental health.

They also discussed the grants the organisation may be eligible to apply for.

In December, Executive Director and Manager of Operations Kaitlyn Bywater felt saddened and concerned that they saw a significant increase in mums and families experiencing food instability over the last few months leading up to Christmas.

The Nurtured Village acknowledged that the Christmas season is a major stress for families, so they came up with the Secret Santa initiative, asking the community to become one and donate to help build Christmas hampers.

The charity is thankful for the donations received for the initiative and the generosity and support of The Hills district community. The Hills branch remains laser-focused on expanding its programs and outreach in 2025.

Nationwide, the Nurtured Village delivered over 250 hampers in 2024, amounting to \$130,000 worth of support to Australian families. Achieving this milestone meant the collective help of 96 volunteers.

Marketing Manager Michael Holani reflects on the previous year's strides and highlights the efforts of everyone involved.

"The Nurtured Village Hampers Hills District proudly marks another successful year of operations, continuing its mission to prevent and advocate maternal mental health disorders by creating communities for mums. This milestone reflects the dedication of volunteers, the generosity of donors and the unwavering support of the community," he said.

The charity manages home-cooked meals, store-bought foods and gifts in the

form of a hamper that is randomly gifted to a young family each month in each town and city to advocate for and promote mental health for mums.

Nominations open monthly for all biological, foster, kinship-care mothers or stepmothers. Members of the community nominate individuals or families through their website. The hamper recipients are then selected at random. As the charity isn't means-tested, winners are chosen randomly unless a high-risk case is identified, enabling access without a mental health diagnosis.



A family with the donations

Executive Director and Manager of Operations Kaitlyn Bywater doing volunteer activity

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

'We acknowledge the traditional Owners and Custodians of the land of the Dharug and Darkinjung People on which we work and pay our respects to Indigenous Elders past, present and emerging'. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the land's first storytellers.

# 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. Its 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 of drop off points for the Hills to Hawkesbury Community News, visit our website [www.hillstohawkesbury.com.au](http://www.hillstohawkesbury.com.au) or click on the QR code.







## Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal

On Monday 13th January, the Glenorie Rural Fire Brigade was able to come together to celebrate the award of the Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal (HOSM) to two of our members.

Chris Compton and Chloe Compton (nee Paton), who were deployed to British Columbia, Canada in 2017, as a part of the Australian response to wildfires in the country at that time. They spent 6 weeks working as a part of the very first RFS overseas deployment of firefighters on the ground.

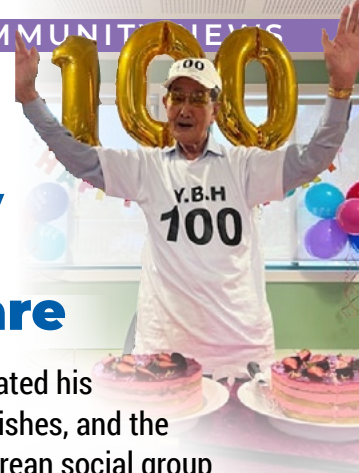
The medal is a part of the Australian Honours System, and is awarded to those who perform humanitarian service in a foreign country, in dangerous environments.

Chloe and Chris are based in the UK these days, so it was wonderful to welcome them home to Glenorie, during their Christmas visit with their families, who also were able to attend and see them receive their awards.

Acting District Manager, Inspector Nathan Barndon, District Officer Ian Waddell, and Deputy Group Captain Matthew Lloyd made the presentations.

Well done to Chloe and Chris, we're very proud of you.

## BONG HO celebrates his 100th birthday with Hills Community Care



Hills resident Bong Ho Yoo celebrated his 100th birthday with cake, warm wishes, and the company of members from his Korean social group at Balcombe Heights Estate recently.

Having lived for a century, Bong Ho's life story is quite remarkable. Born in 1925, he moved from North Korea to South Korea during the Korean War when he was just 27 years old.

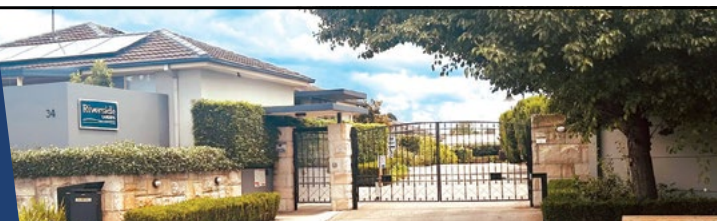
Three years later, he met his wife, and in 1973, they relocated to Darwin, where Bong Ho worked as a welder for John Holland at the Darwin Airport extension. A year later, the couple moved to Sydney, where Bong Ho continued his work as a welder until his retirement in 1993.

Bong Ho and late his wife have four children: two sons and two daughters, as well as four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. In his free time, he enjoys playing golf and listening to Korean music.

It's well-known that longevity is often linked to being socially active and part of a community. Bong Ho is a regular attendee at the Korean Social Group, where he takes advantage of weekly opportunities to connect with others, engage in light exercise, and participate in Korean cultural activities.

Various social groups for seniors from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds are delivered by Hills Community Care at Balcombe Heights Estate in Baulkham Hills. To learn more, visit [www.hillscommunitycare.com.au](http://www.hillscommunitycare.com.au) and click on the 'Social Day Programs' tab.

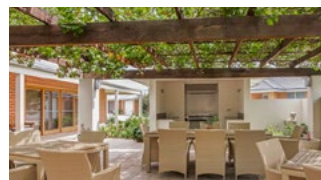
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## STORMS HIT HILLS, HAWKESBURY

Severe thunderstorms swept across The Hills and Hawkesbury, along with Metropolitan Sydney and parts of NSW, on Wednesday, 15 January, causing power shutdowns, fallen trees, and debris shutting down roads. The weather event continued up until Sunday, 19 January, battering the state's north eastern coasts.

Crews were dispatched to assist in clearing the roads. The NSW State Emergency Service reported that its members have responded to more than 4,000 incidents since the morning of 15 January.

Multiple brigades in the Hills and Hawkesbury, such as Blaxlands Ridge, Glenhaven, Kellyville, Kenthurst, Oakville, Round Corner, and Wilberforce also attended to a large number of calls within and outside their local areas.

The Rouse Hill Rural Fire Brigade responded to calls on John's Rd, Halcrows Rd, and Cattai Rd regarding damage due to weather.

Glossodia RFB responded to reports of downed trees on Bull Ridge Rd on Wednesday evening. Glossodia crews also helped Kurrajong RFB and Kurrajong Heights RFS members in opening Burrallow, while the Kurrajong Heights crews also cleared trees on Bull Ridge Rd.

In Carlingford, the roof of a property was ripped off, resulting in 14 people requiring alternative accommodation. Meanwhile, a fallen tree trapped a person inside a car in Castle Hill.

Obstructions were also reported on Glenorie, Dural, Box Hill, and Kenthurst, among others.

The SES reported that more than 143,000 connections experienced power outages during the storms.

## MULTIPLE OFFENSES

At 1:25 AM on 16 January, Hills Police arrested a 30-year-old male from Box Hill for multiple offenses, including driving while disqualified and possession of suspected stolen goods.

Charges:

- Driving an unregistered and uninsured vehicle
- Using unauthorized number plates
- Providing false information to police
- Driving during a disqualification period
- Possession of suspected stolen goods

It will be alleged the 30yo was stopped for a random breath test. Police discovered the vehicle had mismatched number plates. He initially provided false details but later admitted his identity. A search of the vehicle revealed various power tools and other items suspected to be stolen.

He was taken to Castle Hill Police Station and charged with multiple offenses.

## NEW TRAINING CENTRE IN THE HILLS

The NSW RFS – Hills District officially opened a new state-of-the-art training facility at Sackville North on December 2024. It will help in supporting the training and operational needs of RFS crews and surrounding Districts.

The training facility includes a training room equipped with wireless internet, video conferencing capabilities and essential radio systems. It also houses structural firefighting hot cell and warm cell structures for realistic training scenarios, along with safe work on roofs training. Amenities such as a kitchen, BBQ area, accessible restrooms, PPC washing and drying facilities and a backup generator are also onsite. The site, co-located with the Sackville North Brigade station, has evolved over a decade, with the latest construction phase completed in July 2024.

As a special tribute, the training centre room has been named in honour of Group Captain James 'Jim' Smith AFSM (Retired), whose extraordinary contributions over 50 years have left a lasting legacy.

"As a Captain of Middle Dural Brigade for 16 years and 25 years as Group Captain, Jim's dedication to the RFS and his community is exemplary," Deputy Commissioner McKechnie said.

## HIGH-SPEED PURSUIT

At approximately 7:18 PM on Thursday, 16 January, Hills Highway Patrol observed a red Honda CB1000RR motorcycle allegedly speeding on Kenthurst Rd, Dural.

The rider, a 26-year-old male, was allegedly clocked at 105 km/h in a 70 km/h zone and subsequently fled from police, reaching speeds estimated at 160 km/h. The pursuit continued until the rider abandoned the motorcycle on Raym Rd, Kenthurst.

With the assistance of a police dog unit, the rider was located hiding in nearby bushland and was arrested. The rider, who was found to be disqualified from driving, provided negative results for both breath and drug tests.

He has been charged with multiple offences including police pursuit and drive whilst disqualified. He was refused bail by Parramatta Local Court.

## BREAK & ENTERS

In Box Hill, a break and enter occurred at Hereford St, Box Hill, between 03:43 and 03:46 AM on the 11<sup>th</sup> of January, 2025.

Three persons of interest (POIs) entered the backyard and cut a hole in the rear screen door but did not gain entry. They then jumped the side fence into the neighbour's yard. The incident was captured on CCTV.

According to Police, a small white vehicle was seen, if residents could check CCTV in adjoining streets.

On the other hand, in Pennant Hills, a break and enter occurred at Cherrybrook Rd between 03:00 and 06:00 AM on the same day.

Entry was gained through a ground floor side window after removing the flyscreen. Residents in adjoining streets are encouraged to check their CCTVs for any suspicious activity around these times.

If you have any information, please contact CrimeStoppers NSW.

## ROOF ABLAZE

On 17 January, occupants of a Riverstone home near Blacktown in western Sydney have safely evacuated from their property after being alerted their roof was on fire by their neighbours.

Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW) responded to reports of the fire in King Street just after 1:00 pm after the occupants called Triple Zero (000) from outside the home.

The blaze was in the roof space and ceiling and quickly spread to the second level.

Firefighters battled the fire inside the dwelling but their efforts were hampered when the roof structure partially collapsed.

Crews extinguished the blaze within an hour and there were no reported injuries.

FRNSW and NSW Police are currently investigating the cause of the fire however it is believed to be electrical in nature.



## WHO IS KEITH LEES AND WHY WAS HE ARRESTED

BY DIANA PATON

Police Officers attached to Kuring-Gai Police Area Command arrested 72-year-old Keith Lees at a property on Kenthurst Road, Dural at about 8am on Thursday 2 January 2025. He was wanted on an arrest warrant for an alleged murder in Queensland 27 years ago.

The warrant was issued in July 2023 in relation to an alleged murder of Meaghan Rose in 1997 on the Sunshine Coast.

Much of the back story to this arrest was covered by the Australia True Crime Podcast which you can listen to here <https://shows.acast.com/australiantruecrime>, then look for Episodes 573 to 577 (577 includes details of the latest update). The podcast first aired on 23rd December 2024.

It was a podcast listener who provided the breakthrough to Police enabling them to find and arrest Keith Lees. Police first visited a unit block in Hornsby. A neighbour knew the man police were looking for as David Japaljarri.

Readers may wonder what happened between 1997 and today. This is covered in the podcast.

## E-Waste Plus Event

Saturday 15 February | 9am - 3:30pm  
Castle Hill Showground

This FREE event will allow you to drop off a range of household items for recycling, including e-waste, soft and hard plastics, polystyrene and textiles.

This event is exclusively for residents of The Hills Shire – proof of residence is required at drop-off.



## Macquarie Towns Garden Club

### It's gardening weather!

Gardeners and would-be gardeners will enjoy Macquarie Towns Garden Club's Plant Sale which will be held at Windsor Library's Stan Stevens Room on Thursday, 7th March from 11am to 1.30pm.

"We have a very active group of members who have been tending and sheltering their plants all through this humid, hot and wet summer, just so they can share their love of gardening with the public," said organiser Ruth Knight. "It's a great way to buy plants at bargain prices."

Held in partnership with Hawkesbury Library service, the Plant Sale is an opportunity to ask

the experts about any gardening questions and as a bonus - there will be a free plant for each customer! Visitors are encouraged to share a cup of tea and have a chat with fellow garden lovers. Please bring cash – there are no EFTPOS facilities.

Macquarie Towns Garden Club Plant Sale – Thursday, 6th March in the Stan Stevens Room at Hawkesbury Central Library, Deerubbin Centre, 300 George Street, Windsor, 11am to 1.30pm.

For more information about Macquarie Towns Garden Club please visit the website: [macquarietownsgardenclub.wordpress.com](http://macquarietownsgardenclub.wordpress.com)

## Notice of intention to grant a licence under section 151 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974

**Public consultation on the proposal to grant a licence is open until 3 February 2025.**

The proposed grant of licence is to Hunter Anzac Memorial Limited ACN 623 275 196 for the premises known as Long Tan Place House, located near the corner of Long Tan Place and Scheyville Road within Scheyville National Park. The proposed licence area includes Long Tan Place House and the surrounding yard area (see Figure 1).

Hunter Anzac Memorial Limited have an existing licence for areas within Scheyville Camp precinct, Scheyville National Park, that provides for the operation of a public museum, a military vehicle restoration society, military members shed and community activities.

The proposed licence would enable Hunter Anzac Memorial Limited to undertake work to refurbish Long Tan Place House before use as an office and/or caretaker accommodation to support operations under its existing licence.

The proposed licence is for a term of 10-years with two option terms of 5-years (potential total term of 20 years).



Figure 1: proposed licence area

Public consultation commenced on **20 January 2025** and will conclude on **3 February 2025**.

You can provide feedback during this time by completing the associated online form at [environment.nsw.gov.au/consult](http://environment.nsw.gov.au/consult), by email to [commercial.enquiries@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:commercial.enquiries@environment.nsw.gov.au) or by post to Property and Lease Management Unit, Public Consultation for Long Tan Place House, Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta NSW 2124.





# LOCAL LEGENDS HONoured AT HILLS SHIRE AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS

Local heroes whose selfless efforts have transformed lives. They were celebrated during The Hills Shire Council's Australia Day Awards at the Pioneer Theatre on Wednesday 22 January.

The event celebrated the extraordinary contributions of individuals and groups across five categories: **Community Group of the Year**, **Environmental Citizen of the Year**, **Young Citizen of the Year**, **Senior Citizen of the Year**, and **Citizen of the Year**.

Mayor of The Hills Shire, Dr Michelle Byrne said

*"I am incredibly thankful for the efforts of these exceptional individuals and groups whose selfless contributions to our community make the Shire a better place. Their remarkable efforts reflect the true essence of Australian values and the spirit of mateship. They remind us of the power of community and inspire each of us to make a meaningful difference."*

## **Community Group of the Year Winner: Bears of Hope**

The Castle Hill organisation provides comfort, counselling, and resources for families who have experienced the loss of a baby during pregnancy, birth, or infancy. The organisation offers fee-free face-to-face counselling, support groups, community events, and education sessions for local hospitals. They also supply bears, resources, and cuddle cots to hospitals to help grieving families.

## **Highly Commended: Hills Musical Theatre Company (HMTc)**

HMTc's musicals allow people to participate and enjoy theatre within the community. Their musical, Seussical, was particularly noteworthy for its accessible and inclusive approach,

featuring performers of all abilities, receiving praise from theatre enthusiasts and audience members alike ensuring everyone, regardless of background or ability, could participate in and enjoy live theatre.

## **Environmental Citizen of the Year Winner: Patrick Shirvington**

Patrick is a renowned Hills' landscape artist and multimedia creator, known for his work as an illustrator, curator, and children's book illustrator, including Can You Find Me and Can You Find 12 Busy Bees. Passionate about the local environment, he works as a bush regenerator for the National Trust and shares his expertise through nature journaling workshops for The Hills Shire Council's Environment Workshop program.



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### Young Citizen of the Year Winner: Megan Sutton

Megan is a dedicated advocate for disability awareness and a committed volunteer, known for her role as Run Director for the Rouse Hill Parkrun. Over 8 years, she has volunteered more than 130 times, ensuring the safety of participants in the weekly 5km community event. Megan lives with a disability and is passionate about advocacy including the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme, which helps individuals with non-visible disabilities receive understanding and support in public spaces.

### Winner: Ashleen Khela

At 12 years-old, Ashleen is one of Australia's youngest-ever female published authors. She has released her fiction book 17 Stories at just 11 years-old, with proceeds being donated to Australian charities and to support aid programs in developing nations. She self-funded the production of the book through creative efforts like recycling bottles, selling backyard plants, and using her savings.

### Senior Citizen of the Year

#### Winner: Alan Grady

Alan has been a member of Rotary for 50 years and is an active participant in the Norwest Sunrise Rotary Club and the Wesley Castle Hill Uniting Church. He is also a charter member of the Hills Older Men's Network. Always eager to contribute, Alan is quick to volunteer for many projects. For the past 20 years, Alan has worked in the Rotary Warehouse, packing

donated medical and school supplies to be sent overseas.

### Citizen of the Year

#### Winner: Katherine Kirk

Katherine is a mother of five and serves as the President of the Castle High School P&C Association. She organises BBQ fundraisers, chairs meetings, and collaborates with others to ensure that teachers, staff, and students have the best possible learning environment. She holds the position of Vice President at Northmead CAPA High School, supports Baulkham Hills Hawks AFL Club, Hills Spirit FC and volunteers with the Castle Hill RSL Sub-Branch, organising events which contributed to the Castle Hill Sub-Branch winning an award at the RSL NSW Congress in 2024.

### Highly Commended: Tara Gleig

Tara has been a member of the Hills Domestic Violence Prevention Committee since 2015 and has served as its secretary for the past two years. She helps facilitate the annual Parent Forum, runs the Love Bites program which reaches thousands of young people educating them about respectful relationships in collaboration with Hills Police Youth Officer Ethan West. She also volunteers with the Shining Light Foundation, which supports the homeless.

To learn more about Council's Australia Day celebrations, visit [www.thehills.nsw.gov.au](http://www.thehills.nsw.gov.au) and search 'Australia Day 2025'.

## THE HILLS SHIRE TO WELCOME NEW CITIZENS DURING AUSTRALIA DAY

Close to 100 Hills Shire residents will officially become Australian citizens during a special Citizenship Ceremony this Australia Day.

Residents from 29 countries, including India, Kenya, New Zealand, Ecuador, China, Mexico, and Sweden, will make the life-changing pledge during The Hills Shire Council's event this Sunday, January 26.

Aye Thidar Thaw from Myanmar will be among them on Australia Day. She expressed her pride in becoming a new citizen.

"Becoming an Australian citizen marks a new chapter filled with belonging and opportunity. I wish to be part of this inclusive community and contribute to its vibrant diversity," Ms Thidar Thaw said.

"I am most looking forward to exercising my rights and responsibilities as an Australian citizen."

To read about more new citizens and their personal stories, visit the Hills Shire Council's website and search "New Citizens".



# WELCOME THE YEAR OF THE SNAKE

Join us for a free Lion Dance Parade  
and receive a free sweet treat

**Wednesday 29 January**

**11am - 11.30am**

Starts outside Specsavers and ends outside Red Dollar,  
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*out and about*

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## Hills Squash

Squash was once a popular choice for sport particularly in the 80's and 90's with many taking to courts across the country to try the game. It was during this time Australia shone on the local and International stage, producing numerous World Champions.

At its peak it is estimated more than million Australians participated in the sport however the last year 25 years has seen squash courts across the country disappear and replaced with gyms or pulled down for development. As a result, squash is no longer in 20 most played sports in the Country, however with the inclusion of the sport in the 2028 Olympics, James Ethan is hopeful squash will make a resurgence.

For local James Ethan, squash became his lifelong passion the moment he picked up a racket for the first time at 17 years old. James was determined to master the game, practicing hour after hour and taking on the more experienced players in the Club until he could beat them. By the time he was 22, James achieved 'A' grade status and by the time he was 25, he had achieved State grade level. Squash had become his life, he trained six days a week: running, gym, squash practice and coaching.

At the peak of his playing career, James reached a World Ranking of 250 travelling around the country playing in tournaments. However, his real dream was to own squash courts and to teach others the love of the game and to train the next generation of Australian and World Champion Squash Courts.

James ran the only squash courts in the Hills Local Government Area at Baulkham Hills until recently when the building was demolished leaving Hills Squash without a home. However, since then Hills Squash has found a new home at Dural Recreational Centre, returning three forgotten, damaged and unused courts to their former glory and creating opportunities for residents to play squash locally again.

When you speak with James, his love of the game is evident as he tells you about his own successful squash career including writing

a book, coaching up and coming Australian Champions and why everyone should give squash a go, regardless of ability. James will tell you how fun the game is especially when you play with family and friends as well as the health benefits including burning calories, increasing aerobic fitness, improving flexibility, building strength and power, and of course improving the hand-eye coordination. And yes, for the beginners, there is a slightly bigger rubber ball to play the game with!

If you are looking for a good work out or a social activity or simply haven't played in years, then why not pick up a racket and give squash a go!

For more information on Hills Squash or to book a court go to [www.hillssquash.com.au](http://www.hillssquash.com.au)



Australian Government



### New Richmond Bridge Stage 2 Have Your Say

Transport for NSW is seeking feedback on the Review of Environmental Factors for New Richmond Bridge Stage 2. The proposal includes building a new four lane bridge over the Hawkesbury River and associated traffic improvements.

The Review of Environmental Factors is on public display for feedback until 21 February 2025.

Speak to the project team:

#### Online session

- Wednesday 29 January 2025, 6pm to 7pm via [nswroads.work/richmondbridgescis](http://nswroads.work/richmondbridgescis)

#### Face to face sessions

- Saturday 1 February 2025, 1pm to 3pm and
- Wednesday 5 February 2025, 4pm to 6pm at North Richmond Community Centre, 33 William Street, North Richmond

#### Find out more

Phone: 1800 370 778

Email: [richmondbridge@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:richmondbridge@transport.nsw.gov.au)

Web: [nswroads.work/NewRichmondBridge](http://nswroads.work/NewRichmondBridge)

LT0140

NSW Department of Education



### Application period for selective high school and opportunity class entry in 2026

Application dates: **Thursday 7 November 2024 to Friday 21 February 2025**

Applications for selective high school entry in Year 7 and opportunity class entry in Year 5 in 2026 are open from **Thursday 7 November 2024 to Friday 21 February 2025**.

Selective high schools and opportunity classes are one of the ways that the NSW Department of Education provides support for high potential and gifted students. High potential and gifted students are supported across all NSW public schools through high potential and gifted education programs.

Students living in rural and remote locations may apply for Aurora College, which provides online selective high school and opportunity classes in NSW public primary schools and high schools.

For more information and to apply online visit: [edu.nsw.link/shs-oc](http://edu.nsw.link/shs-oc)



Contact the department's Selective Education Unit:  
Email: [ssu@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ssu@det.nsw.edu.au)  
Phone: 1300 880 367

**Applications close Friday 21 February 2025.**

NS0008



# EXPERIENCE EXCEPTIONAL HEARING CARE AT EAR STUDIO: **Redefining Standards with Best Practices**

In the heart of the Hills District lies a clinic that's changing the way hearing care is delivered – *Ear Studio*. With kindness, expertise, and an unwavering commitment to excellence, we provide personalised solutions that truly make a difference.

Unlike many clinics operating in Australia's largely unregulated audiology market, where 80% fail to meet even basic standards, *Ear Studio* is a trusted leader in best-practice hearing care. We don't just fit hearing devices; we transform lives by ensuring each client's journey is tailored, effective, and supportive from start to finish.

Following best practice principles means conducting thorough assessments, precise fittings, and comprehensive follow-ups. These steps ensure that the device is comfortable and effective in meeting each person's unique hearing needs. We've invested in the latest technologies and training to provide these services because we know this investment is an investment in our clients' well-being.

Our commitment to best practice care is highlighted by our membership in the "Hearing Up" network. This network obliges its members to adhere to high standards, ensuring every

part of the audiological process is handled professionally and with care. *Ear Studio* is proud to be one of only 40 clinics in Australia, and the only one in the hills district, to have met these requirements. This affiliation underscores our dedication to offering superior care that goes beyond the standard offerings of many larger retail chains.

The unregulated nature of the Australian audiology market means many clinics can operate without following best practice principles. This often results in poorly fitted devices and inadequate support, leaving clients dissatisfied. At *Ear Studio*, we are dedicated to filling this gap. Our meticulous approach ensures our clients receive not only the best devices but also the best care and support throughout their hearing journey.

Being a client at *Ear Studio* means entering a partnership where your hearing health is our top priority. From the moment you walk

through our doors, you are welcomed into an environment that values your individual needs. Our clinicians take the time to understand your lifestyle, preferences, and hearing challenges. They tailor each step of the fitting process to suit you perfectly. This personalised care continues beyond the initial fitting, with ongoing support and adjustments to ensure your hearing device serves you well.

At *Ear Studio*, we are more than just a clinic; our clients are at the heart of everything we do, and we are a community dedicated to enhancing lives through better hearing. By choosing us, you choose a path defined by quality, compassion, and unwavering support. We invite you to experience the difference that best practice care can make and join us on a journey toward clearer, more vibrant hearing.

Please call our friendly team at EAR STUDIO on 02 9159 6122 to enquire or book, you can also visit [www.earstudio.com.au](http://www.earstudio.com.au) for more information or to book online. We look forward to hearing from you.

Thuvi with an Ear Studio client

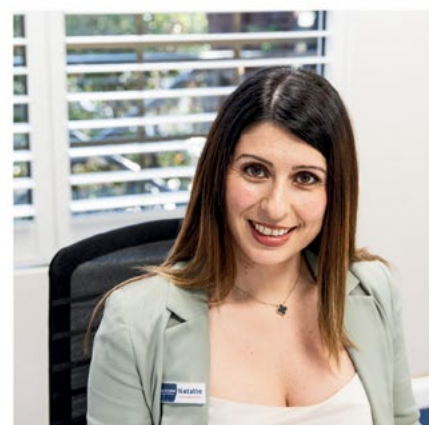
## EAR STUDIO

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Or scan to visit our website



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[reception@earstudio.com.au](mailto:reception@earstudio.com.au)

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Lawton House

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Suite 9-10 / 60 Cecil Avenue,  
Castle Hill NSW 2154

# TWO NEW PARKS in the Hawkesbury region now open!

The wait is over! The brand-new playground at Jack Gow Reserve in McGraths Hill is officially open, and it promises to be a fantastic addition to the neighborhood.

Nestled along Andrew Thompson Drive, the playground is designed with input from the community, ensuring that it truly caters to the needs and desires of local families.

This impressive playground features an array of engaging activities for children of all ages. Highlights include a towering climbing structure complete with slides, a variety of swings—including both seated and nest swings—ground-level trampolines, a classic see-saw, a fun spinner, and an imaginative play cubby that also serves as a charging station.

To enhance the outdoor experience, the playground is accompanied by a new riding and walking path, promoting physical activity

and providing a scenic route for families and walkers. The area is well-equipped for comfort, featuring picnic tables, benches, and ample seating options, making it an ideal spot for family gatherings or a quick outdoor snack.

In recognition of the Australian sun, shade sails have been thoughtfully installed above both play and seating areas, ensuring that kids can play safely while parents relax. The inclusion of strategically placed bins and enhanced landscaping further beautifies the space, making it not just a place for play but also a welcoming community hub. Visit the new playground at Jack Gow Reserve and experience the joy of play in a thoughtfully designed environment that truly reflects the spirit of McGraths Hill. It's time to get outside, have fun, and enjoy all that this vibrant new space has to offer!

older play equipment has now been replaced and is suitable for children aged up to 12 years.

Other amenities include a new climbing tower with slide, there are new swings, an obstacle course, a roundabout, rocker, seating for parents overlooking the playground and the sports courts and additional access to tennis courts. Families can enjoy a picnic at tables, there is new tree planting, landscaping and a walking path.

Come and enjoy these beautiful spaces ready-made for families to have fun and enjoy the open air with their friends in safe and delightful environments.

Jack-Gow-Reserve (© hawkesbury city council)



Hawkesbury City Council Banner

## Freemans Reach Reserve playground now open

Along with Jack Gow Reserve is another new playground at Freemans Reach, delivered on time by the Hawkesbury Shire Council. The



Freemans Reach Parkland



Artist's Impression

Price Range  
**\$585,000 to \$1,935,000\***

## Retire with more in Bella Vista

### New apartments under construction and ready to move in Spring 2025

Embrace an exceptional lifestyle at **Bella Vista Haven Retirement Living**. The highly anticipated Corymbia Residences will offer a variety of one, two and three-bedroom apartments, a limited collection of penthouses and more resident amenities including an indoor heated pool, library and cinema.

Act now! Join the First Release Club to receive floor plans, inclusions and pricing before the public release. Retire with more at Bella Vista Haven.

**Bella Vista Haven**  
Retirement Living

Register your interest today.  
**13 28 36 | [aveo.com.au/bellavistahaven](https://aveo.com.au/bellavistahaven)**  
📍 **28 Norbrik Dr, Bella Vista**

**aveo**

\*Price correct as at 1 October 2024. Images are for illustrative purposes only. The entry payment and any other amounts payable depend on any available contract option you select. A regular service fee will be payable and you may have to pay a departure fee when you leave the village. Furnishings not included.





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1300 533 296 | [sales@livingchoice.com.au](mailto:sales@livingchoice.com.au)

**livingchoice.com.au**



You may have to pay a departure fee when you leave this village which may impact on the capital gains received. CGI renders shown are for illustration purposes only. GAL0003

### SPENCER VILLA 3 2 2

The Spencer has a luxurious master suite and expansive living areas. The modern kitchen and dining space flow effortlessly onto a large patio, ideal for outdoor gatherings and relaxation.

### ASHDALE VILLA 2 2 1

Discover the perfect blend of comfort and style in the Ashdale. Enjoy seamless indoor-outdoor living with a spacious patio that's perfect for relaxing or entertaining.

### Galston's Leisure Centre Now Under Construction.



CGI renders shown are for illustration purposes only



CASTLE HILL RSL CLUB SUPPORTS

# Local Youth Filmmakers

The powerful short film *Bubblegum and Bunyips* is making waves after being accepted into the Academy Qualifying FlickerUp Shorts Competition at the 34th Flickerfest International Short Film Festival, held at Bondi Beach from January 17-26, 2025.

*Bubblegum and Bunyips* tells the moving story of a middle-aged Indigenous Australian woman reflecting on her youth during the Stolen Generation. A pivotal scene blends childhood innocence with harsh reality, as she and her friends mistake the splashing sounds of welfare officers approaching for the mythical *bunyip*. What followed was the devastating separation from her family and community—an emotional truth captured beautifully in this short film.

In support of creative storytelling, CHRG (Castle Hill RSL Group) is proud to have provided funding through the ClubGRANTS program to Kellyville High School. This funding has enabled students to take their filmmaking to the next level and continue telling important Australian stories.

The talented students are now working on their next short film, set to begin production in 2025. While details remain under wraps, the film will be mostly shot onsite at Castle Hill RSL Club, showcasing the Club's ongoing commitment to supporting young creatives and the arts.

A CHRG representative said, "Films like *Bubblegum and Bunyips* remind us of storytelling's ability to educate, inspire, and create

connection. We're proud to support Kellyville High School students and are excited to see their next project come to life here at Castle Hill RSL Club."

Castle Hill RSL Club continues to champion local youth initiatives, helping aspiring filmmakers share stories that resonate both locally and nationally.

Be sure to support *Bubblegum and Bunyips* at Flickerfest 2025 and celebrate the incredible talent emerging from our community.



Fabio Caprarelli (Head Teacher, Kellyville High School – below right) with the cast and crew on wrap day of their last film



LYNWOOD LINKS

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YEAR OF THE SNAKE

## LUNAR NEW YEAR

28TH & 29TH JANUARY



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FROM 6PM

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RSL CLUB

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[www.castlehillrsl.com.au](http://www.castlehillrsl.com.au)

LAND LEASE COMMUNITIES GIVES  
THE FREEDOM TO RETIRE WELL

## Halcyon Gables Homebuyer tells us his story

Tony Canavan knows what it takes to set himself up well for retirement. Tony, who has been an accountant for 50 years and still enjoys his work, has recently made the decision to buy into Stockland's newest over 60's community, Halcyon Gables in Sydney's Hills district.

Tony is focused on making smart decisions for his future, so he can spend time on the things he loves.

"I'd like to remain active mentally and physically as long as I can; the prospect of older age can be a bit daunting. Because of the decisions I've made, I can be with my family which is important, as is keeping myself busy, I really enjoy my work," Tony said.

Buying a home in the Stockland Halcyon Gables community was an easy choice for Tony as it allows him to maintain his financial freedom. Unlike many retirement villages, Deferred Management Fees, also known as Exit Fees, are not charged at Stockland Halcyon Gables, which is a Land Lease Community.

Halcyon Gables gives homeowners the ability to buy the home they want, in a community that offers an exceptional quality of life.



Tony Canavan who is one of the first home buyers at Stockland Halcyon Gables

Then, if homeowners decide to move on from the community, they can do so with the freedom of knowing they will retain all capital gains made on the sale of the property.

"I believe most models take a fair chunk of the capital gains upon sale, but the Stockland Halcyon model doesn't. This gives me the peace of mind that if I have to sell or move, I am not losing any capital gains. I'm looking forward to spending many years in the Gables community given the ease of living it offers," said Tony.

Tony can return to the area, where he once lived with family, and be close to his daughter who is living in the adjoining Stockland masterplanned community; with the added time to enjoy the independence offered by Halcyon Gables, like having access to quality, world-class facilities, but not needing to maintain it all.

Buyers into Halcyon Gables select and own their homes, while paying a weekly site fee that allows them access to, shared services like having a community manager and the community bus, and access to facilities like the cinema, pool, spa and fitness centre.

"It's great to have no deferred management fees, and the weekly site fees are similar to what

An artist's impression of Halcyon Gables a secure, over-60s community offering low-maintenance living in style.

I'm paying now in strata levies, so it's a good deal for me."

"The gated community is also attractive to me with the ability to lock up and leave, while knowing the management team, and my trusted neighbours and friends are keeping an eye on things," Tony said.

Ken Franklin, Project Director, Stockland Halcyon Gables, said land lease communities are growing in New South Wales as a direct result of demand from home buyers who can see both the lifestyle and financial benefits.

"Stockland Home Buyers, like Tony, can have confidence buying into a Halcyon community. We know our customers are drawn to all the benefits of community life, but they particularly like that the financial structure is simple and transparent, with no hidden costs."

Offering country charm, with all the conveniences of the Hills district, Stockland Halcyon Gables is, just a short drive from Rouse Hill and less than an hour to the picturesque Blue Mountains.

To find out more about Stockland Halcyon Gables, visit [www.stockland.com.au/halcyon-gables](http://www.stockland.com.au/halcyon-gables).



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**Providers of personalised hearing care for the community**





Artist's impression. Subject to change.

# Keep what's yours. Enjoy what matters.

Welcome to the Hills District's premier over-60s community, where your home is more than just a place to live, and each day invites you to embrace a life of excitement and connection.

At Halcyon Gables, your home and gains are yours. With no deferred management fees, no exit fees, no stamp duty, and the ability to keep your capital gains, you can focus on living the life you love.

**Visit our Sales and Information Centre**  
**117B Old Pitt Town Rd, Gables**  
**10am to 4pm, Monday to Friday**



Call 1800 050 050 or scan the  
QR code to register for our next  
information session



Stockland | Halcyon Gables

Price correct as at 01 December 2024. Subject to change. Subject to availability. All photographs, illustrations, statements and information in this advertisement, are for illustrative purposes only and are based on information available to and the intention of Stockland at the time of creation (December 2024) and are subject to change without notice. No diagram, photograph, illustration, statement or information amounts to a legally binding obligation on or warranty by Stockland and Stockland accepts no liability for any loss or damage suffered by any person who relies on them either wholly or in part. Indications of location, distance or size are approximate and for indicative purposes only. Subject to change.

# The Hills Shire Council News

## Have a Stellar Time at Hills Lunar Festival

Join us at Arthur Whitling Park on Saturday, 8 February for a day of festivities, fun, and food as we welcome the Year of the Snake.

Indulge in delicious Asian eats, enjoy vibrant cultural performances, and embrace the captivating festive atmosphere of the festival.

The unmissable evening will be a seven-hour feast of the senses featuring cultural food stalls, on-stage performances, free craft activities, free face painting and a fireworks finale.

Attendees are encouraged to utilise the Metro, which is located within a short walking distance from Arthur Whitling Park.

**When:** 2pm – 9pm, Saturday 8 February  
**Where:** Aurthur Whitling Park, Castle Hill

Scan the QR code to learn more about Hills Lunar Festival.



## What's on at the Pioneer Theatre Chinese New Year Concert

Join us in celebrating the Chinese New Year with the Western Sydney Symphony Orchestra at the Pioneer Theatre on January 29, 2025. The orchestra will perform beloved traditional Chinese music in honour of this festive occasion.

Discover the rich heritage of Chinese culture while enjoying beautiful music that captures the spirit of the celebration.

Tickets cost: \$5-\$50

Scan the QR code to learn more.



## Have your say on FOGO and win!



The Hills Shire Council is planning to launch a Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) waste collection service in our next waste contracts which commence in October 2027. This program will enable you to recycle food scraps by placing them in your green bin instead of your red bin, helping to reduce the amount of organic waste sent to landfill.

To facilitate this, green bins will be changed from a fortnightly to a weekly collection. No changes are currently planned to your red and yellow bins. Your red bin will continue to be collected every week, while your yellow bin will continue to be emptied every second week. At this stage, those who do not have a green bin, will receive one.

We want your input to ensure the FOGO service works best for our community.

We'd like to know:

- What do you know about FOGO?
- How would you like us to communicate to you about FOGO?
- Do you have any concerns or suggestions about this new service?



By completing our quick survey, you may enter the draw to win one of five \$100 vouchers!

To have your say, scan the QR code.

## First Council Meeting

Don't miss our first council meeting on Tuesday, 11 February at 7pm at The Hills Shire Council.

**When:** Tuesday, 11 February at 7pm

**Where:** Council Chamber located on the ground floor of Council's Customer Service and Administration building, 3 Columbia Court, Norwest.





**THE HILLS**  
Sydney's Garden Shire

CASTLE TOWERS

# HILLS LUNAR FESTIVAL

## 农历新年



**2pm – 9pm Saturday 8 February 2025**

**下午2点至晚9点 2025年2月8日星期六**

**Arthur Whitling Park, Castle Hill**

**悉尼城堡山地区 (CASTLE HILL)**

**亚瑟慧琳公园 (ARTHUR WHITLING PARK)**

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and face painting**  
免费手工艺和面部彩绘
- ◆ **On-stage  
performances**  
现场民族表演
- ◆ **Fireworks**  
烟花表演

For more details,  
scan the QR code.

请扫描二维码，  
了解更多详情。



# Stitch your way into the new year

There are many types of crafting which occupy our hands. But in a world that seems to accelerate at every turn.

Slow Stitching offers a place to pause, to breathe, to meander through varying textiles, materials and techniques and create art ~ where the joy of creating can bring more contentment than the final piece. If you think creating at a comfortable pace is something that would work for you this year, come and join the slow stitching class.

Teacher, Ginette is a talented artist with many and varied skills and these are brought together beautifully in her class. For more than 45 years, not only has **Creative Activities** provided classes and activities for those who like to gather together each week, but it's created a community of friends who love to talk, create and be together. Come and join the fun!

For more information, contact Carolyn: text 0416 077 291 or email: [carolong4@gmail.com](mailto:carolong4@gmail.com)



Slow Stitching Teacher, Ginette



## Join our Summer Series Workshops and Activities

Hills Community Aid loves helping communities to thrive, and Wednesdays in January we will be hosting a broad range of workshops and activities for children, families, youth and adults from our Balcombe Heights Estate location. Youth fun involves Brushies and Slushies, Craft Club and Board Games. Families and children will have free activities involving open craft and games with varied themes such as Under the Sea and Australian. There are also a number of affordable wellness themed workshop series for adults including Meditation with Sound Bath, Yoga, Qi Flow for Oneness, Gentle Exercise for Better Health and Upcycling. Don't feel like doing anything formal? Why not drop by for a Hills Daily Grind cuppa and chat at our Walking or Friendship Group.



More information and registrations via the QR Code or our website: [www.hca.org.au](http://www.hca.org.au) or call 96397918.



### Creative Activities 2025

Utilise the "Making the Most of Your Media" class, **Slow Stitching** or learn **Tai Chi**

**Wednesdays 9.30am to 12noon**

Commencing February 5, 2025

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## OPEN DAY

**HAWKESBURY RIVER COUNTY COUNCIL**

**6 Walker Street, South Windsor 2756**

**Sat 22 Feb @ 10am – 1:30pm**

### FOR MORE INFO & REGISTRATION

[inspections@hrc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:inspections@hrc.nsw.gov.au) 4574 9600



## ROADS ACT 1993 – SECTION 29

### NOTICE OF PROPOSAL TO FIX OR VARY THE LEVELS ON BELLS LINE OF ROAD, KURRAJONG ROAD, AND CASTLEREAGH ROAD AS PART OF THE NEW RICHMOND BRIDGE STAGE 2 PROJECT IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF HAWKESBURY

Transport for NSW (Transport) proposes to fix or vary the levels on Bells Line of Road, Kurrajong Road and Castlereagh Road in Richmond and North Richmond as part of the New Richmond Bridge Stage 2 Project, as shown on Transport's Plans NRBS2AURC-NWW-GN-DRG200001-200503.

The plans are available for inspection by members of the public by contacting the project team via email [richmondbridge@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:richmondbridge@transport.nsw.gov.au) or phone 1800 370 778.

Owners of land adjoining the road are entitled to make submissions to Transport in response to the proposal.

Any such submissions should be made to Transport in writing, addressed to the undersigned within 28 days of the date of this notice.

Tim Webster  
Senior Project Development Manager  
Transport for NSW



# Expect The Unexpected

Castle Hill Players presents  
IMPROBABLE FICTION

at the Pavilion Theatre

Dates. 7 Feb – 1 Mar. Wed, Fri,  
Sat 8PM, Sun 4PM

Written by Alan Ayckbourn and  
directed by Dave Went

Welcome to the village of Pendon and its local writer's circle; a group of six creatively mired and artistically deluded scribes. There's Jess, struggling with her historical romance. Grace, longing to write a children's book for her now adult children. Sci-fi obsessed Clem. Vivvi who's into detective fiction. Brevis, adapting the unadaptable into a musical. And the amiable Arnold whose house they all meet in, and the group's only published author - of instruction manuals.

Inevitable personality clashes and relationship issues abound but, after one particularly acrimonious meeting, something magical happens as the writers' half-baked characters literally come to life. As genres intertwine and mysteries are solved, ordinary people create something extraordinary with hilarious consequences.

Alan Ayckbourn is acknowledged as a master of stage comedy. *Improbable Fiction*, his 69th play, will leave you knowing why.

*"Join us for a hilarious journey through some well-known literary and theatrical genres... Expect the unexpected!"*

Dave Went, Director



Wills Burke, Will Shipp

Pavilion Theatre, Castle Hill Showgrounds, Castle Hill

Tickets \$30, Concession \$25

Bookings [paviliontheatre.org.au/improbable-fiction](http://paviliontheatre.org.au/improbable-fiction) or call 02 9634 2929

Enquiries call 02 9634 3846 or email [admin@paviliontheatre.org.au](mailto:admin@paviliontheatre.org.au)



Vanessa Henderson, Jem Rowe, Lauren Asten-Smith

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ALAN AYCKBOURN'S

IMPROBABLE  
FICTION

DIRECTED BY DAVE WENT  
7 FEB – 1 MAR 2025

QR CODE

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OF CASTLE HILL PLAYERS  
IN THE SHOWGROUND SINCE 1966

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paviliontheatre.org.au/improbable-fiction

The Pavilion Theatre  
Hills Showground

## Aussie Pumps

# AUSSIE IS GROWING

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"We design and build machines as if we are going to use them ourselves", said Aussie Pumps Chief Engineer, John Hales.

Great opportunities for Media Manager, Product Managers, Fitters/assemblers, and interns eager to get a start in an aspect of the commercial world where everything you do helps somebody!

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As your Federal Member for Greenway,  
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Albanese Labor Government Delivers for Greenway in 2024-25 Budget

### The Hon. Michelle Rowland MP

PO Box 8525, Blacktown NSW 2148

(02) 9671 4780

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

@mrowlandmp

Michelle.Rowland.MP@aph.gov.au

michellerowland.com.au

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



ADVERTISEMENT

## Only Labor will finish the NBN and keep this essential infrastructure in public hands

In 2013, former Prime Minister Tony Abbott said: *"We are absolutely confident that 25 megs (Mbps) is going to be enough, more than enough, for the average household,"* a forecast award-winning Australian journalist Adam Turner placed in the tech world's *Short-sighted Hall of Fame*. With a 25Mbps connection, downloading a 5GB file (a large software file or update, video game, or HD/4K movie) takes around 30 minutes. At 1Gbps – available with a full fibre connection – the same task takes less than one minute.

Australians have always known a fast and affordable publicly-owned National Broadband Network (NBN) is essential for a modern economy. The Albanese Government is delivering on its vision for a world-class fibre NBN – and we are finishing what we started.

We announced an equity injection of up to \$3 billion into NBN Co to upgrade the remaining Fibre to the Node (FTTN) network. This will see an additional 622,000 premises move off the deteriorating copper network – around 164,000 across New South Wales. This builds on our \$2.4 billion outlay to upgrade an additional 1.5 million premises to full fibre by the end of 2025. We are delivering this on time and on budget. The average Australian household is using more than 450GB of data per month and around 22 connected devices. This is forecast to increase to 1 Terabyte and more than 40 devices by the end of the decade. Fast broadband enables more people and devices to be online at the same time with minimal disruptions. But it's not just about entertainment and seamless

streaming. Fast broadband supports access to essential government services, banking and telehealth. It enables us to learn and work online and it is delivering real cost savings. Households are saving more than 100 hours and \$2,580 per year in avoided travel time and costs. Modelling by Accenture estimates our latest announcement will provide a \$10.4 billion cumulative uplift in GDP over the next decade.

Inexplicably, Peter Dutton and the Coalition want to privatise the NBN, and strand Australians on deteriorating copper that won't meet future needs. And they want to increase wholesale NBN prices to make the NBN more attractive to sell. Peter Dutton is a risk to Australia and cannot be trusted to deliver the essential services we need to build a better future.

### HONOUR THE HEART OF OUR COMMUNITY:

## NOMINATE A SENIOR FOR THE 2025 LOCAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Residents of the Castle Hill electorate are encouraged to nominate outstanding seniors in their community, as nominations for the 2025 NSW Seniors Festival Local Achievement Awards are now open.

The 2025 NSW Seniors Festival and the Local Achievement Awards provide a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the invaluable contributions seniors make to their communities.

If you know a senior who works tirelessly to make our community a better place—whether through volunteering, innovative ideas, or simply by being a pillar of support to family and friends—this is your chance to ensure their efforts are acknowledged.

We are incredibly fortunate to have so many seniors in Castle Hill who give generously of their time, energy, and dedication. By celebrating the contributions of our local seniors, we challenge ageism, honour their efforts, and empower them to overcome social stigma.

Nominations for this esteemed awards program, one of many initiatives from the NSW Government to promote active, healthy, and happy lives for seniors will close soon.

Winners of the Local Achievement Awards will be announced during the 2025 NSW Seniors Festival, which runs from 3–16 March, as part of an exciting schedule of events across the state.



**MARK HODGES MP**  
MEMBER FOR CASTLE HILL

#### AS YOUR STATE MP, I AM HERE TO:

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



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Funded using Parliamentary Entitlements.



Scan the QR Code to Nominate  
a local senior today!

For more information about the NSW Seniors Festival and the Local Achievement Awards, please visit [seniorsfestival.nsw.gov.au](https://seniorsfestival.nsw.gov.au).





**ROBYN PRESTON MP**  
MEMBER FOR HAWKESBURY

**How my office and I can help you**

- Represent you in Parliament and raise local issues with the appropriate Minister or Department
- Answer questions, help you access government services and provide information about community groups and events
- Facilitate applications to become a Justice of the Peace or to obtain a Seniors Card
- Update your electoral enrolment details
- Send a congratulatory letter for anniversaries and birthdays of significance
- Provide you with details on how to apply for government grants

**The office is located at Western Sydney University, Hawkesbury Campus Building R4, College Drive, Richmond. M: PO Box 505 Richmond NSW 2753 T: 02 4578 0300 E: hawkesbury@parliament.nsw.gov.au**

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## Heritage Grants open for Hawkesbury

Member for Hawkesbury, Robyn Preston MP, is encouraging individuals, businesses, local Governments and not-for-profit organisations who are the owner, manager, long-term lessee or custodian of an item listed on the State Heritage Register to apply for the latest round of NSW Heritage Grants.

Ms Preston said applications are now open for the 2025-2027 NSW Heritage Grants round, with grants from \$10,000 to \$300,000 on offer.

"Preserving, maintaining and conserving our heritage is critical to ensuring the longevity of these heritage protected items in our community. This program is about making sure our State listed heritage items can be given

the resources they need to be kept for future generations," Ms Preston said.

Shadow Minister for the Environment, James Griffin MP, has said that this funding will continue to build on the investment made by the former Liberal/Nationals Government, when he was the Minister for Environment and Heritage.

Applications are currently open and will close 30 January 2025 at 10am.

Successful applicants must match funding and successful projects must be delivered between July 2025 and May 2027.

For more information and to apply, please visit <https://www.nsw.gov.au/grants-and-funding/2025-27-caring-for-state-heritage>

## BETTER BUS SERVICES CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY AFTER 12 YEARS OF NEGLECT

The North West region of Sydney has among the highest number of families in New South Wales. Often both parents need to commute to work using Metro Stations such as Tallawong, Rouse Hill and Kellyville. The Metro (opened in 2019) was a valuable addition to the North West's public transport network. The previous government inexplicably terminated the Metro at Tallawong, failing to terminate the Metro at an interchange with Schofields Station a mere 3 kilometres away. This oversight placed unnecessary strain on the Public Bus system. Bus services taking commuters to Metro stations had not been adjusted to be 'fit for purpose' when serving the needs of commuters in the North West wanting to use the Metro to travel to work.

Soon after taking office the Minns Labor Government established the NSW Bus Industry Taskforce. I encouraged as many people as were able to send a submission to the Taskforce. The culmination of 12 months of investigations, engagement and consultation resulted in the Final report being released in May of last year. As result of the findings from the Taskforce report, many bus services in the North West of Sydney were adjusted and received a significant boost.

Buses move more people than any other form of public transport and at the lowest cost to commuters. The previous Government neglected

and underfunded Bus services not just here in the North West but across New South Wales. Poor leadership and coordination within Transport for NSW during the tenure of the previous government caused service degradation, while low driver pay, and inadequate safety systems were ignored.

From Monday the 20th of January commuters of the North West will enjoy more buses more often. In the biggest shake-up the public bus system has seen for years. Capacity will be increased, as will bus service frequency for high demand routes to Sydney Trains and Metro stations. There will be extra services and extended hours of services on several routes. Access to bus services will be expanded to two communities getting their first local bus route, the 748 – Melonba and Jerralong Drive, Schofields, connecting thousands of residents directly to train and Metro services.

Bus routes linking the North West to Rouse Hill Metro station will welcome new services including the 643, 740, 742, 746, 747 and the 748. In Riverstone and Tallawong the 742 bus will run more frequently across the week, running every 30 minutes in the morning and afternoon peaks, doubling the number of services on the route. Similarly, 747 passengers will see additional services, commuters will enjoy buses running every 15 minutes in the morning and evening peaks.



**HAPPY AUSTRALIA DAY**

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**WARREN KIRBY MP**  
MEMBER FOR RIVERSTONE

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AUTHORISED BY WARREN KIRBY MP. FUNDED USING PARLIAMENTARY ENTITLEMENTS.

These timetable changes follow a multimillion dollar investment announced in the 2024-25 budget, providing bus services that the residents of North West Sydney deserve. We know there is more to do. Routes and the frequency of services will continue to be monitored and improved to meet the needs of our rapidly growing population. This Government understands that an efficient public transport system is essential for families, workers, and students, and we will keep delivering on our promise to build a better future for North-West Sydney.

# PETS OF THE WEEK

**The Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter (CAS)**  
is at 10 Mulgrave Rd, Mulgrave.  
Call 4560 4644 for opening hours  
or visit the new webpage  
<https://hawkesburycas.com.au/>



## AT A GLANCE

NAME: RALF  
BREED: Bull Terrier  
Cross Mixed  
SEX: Male  
AGE: 2 Yrs, 4 Mos  
and 1 Wk  
PRICE: \$49



**MEET RALF**, the sweet and playful dog who instantly wins the hearts of everyone he meets. According to staff at the Hawkesbury Companion Animal Centre, Ralf is a social butterfly who thrives on being around people. He seeks out companionship and knows how to make each moment filled with joy and laughter. Staff say when it comes to playtime, Ralf is a bundle of energy ready to take on the day with enthusiasm. From fetching his favourite ball to enjoying a playful game of tug-of-war, Ralf's playful antics are sure to bring a smile to your face. Ralf is also a dog-friendly companion and would thrive in a home with other canine buddies; We always recommend to bring your dog in, to do a meet and greet prior to adoption.

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

**MEET RUPERT**, an energetic dog with a zest for life! Always ready for some fun, Rupert will thrive in a home where he can share his zest for life with his new family. According to staff at the Hawkesbury Companion Animal Centre, Rupert knows basic commands, making him a wonderful fit for those who appreciate a well-mannered dog. His intelligence shines through during playtime and training sessions, and he's eager to learn more. Staff say, good with other dogs, Rupert is a social pup who enjoys the company of his four-legged friends; we do suggest bringing your own dog for a meet and greet if you think he could be the right fit for your family.

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

## AT A GLANCE

NAME: RUPERT  
BREED: American  
Staffordshire Terrier  
SEX: Male  
AGE: 5 Yrs, 4 Mos  
and 1 Wk  
PRICE: \$49



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## The Bromeliad Society of Australia Inc

The Bromeliad Society of Australia Inc will hold their next meeting at the Federation Pavilion, Castle Hill Showground on Saturday, 8th February with plant sales to the public commencing at 10am and the meeting commencing at 12noon.

Guest Speaker for this meeting is David Chandler, a volunteer for the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney.

The particular garden tour that David will share with the BSA was organised through Botanica World Discoveries. It provided an opportunity for him and his wife to visit some of the most beautiful and famous gardens in England and Wales.

It also gave him a wonderful chance to return to his roots and share the beauty of British gardens with his Australian born wife Jenny.

David originally came from England as a young teacher in 1967 and became fascinated with Australian native plants and created a prize winning native garden. This led to him becoming a volunteer guide for the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney.

For the past 20 years he has taken many overseas visitors on walks through our beautiful botanic gardens.

BSA Meetings include plant sales, club news, raffles and competitions as well as providing an opportunity to meet like minded people in a friendly and inviting environment. Contact Ian Hook – mobile 0408 202 269. email: ianhook1@bigpond.com website: [www.bromeliad.org.au](http://www.bromeliad.org.au)



## AN EVENING WITH NICOLA MORIARTY

When: Tuesday, 04 February 2025 | 06:30 PM to 07:30 PM

Join bestselling author Nicola Moriarty, as she discusses her new book Every Last Suspect. A riveting thriller, with a twisted tale of drama and suspense.

Nicola's novels have appeared on top ten bestseller lists in Australia while her third novel, The Fifth Letter, featured on the USA Today Best seller list! Her books have been translated into many languages, and film rights optioned by production companies.

This event is general admission. The evening will conclude with book sales conducted by Dymocks Rouse Hill, cash and card accepted.

Cost: \$13.30PP; Bookings essential online; Suitable for Adults  
Location: The Pioneer Theatre, 14 Pennant Street, Castle Hill, 2154

## SI (SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL) HORNSBY

### Holds Another Successful Fundraiser

Members of SI Hornsby held another very successful fundraiser for the Hornsby and Kuring gai Women's Shelter in September last year. Raffle tickets were sold to raise funds as well as members holding afternoon teas for friends to come along to in their own homes.

The total raised for the shelter came to \$7000. A great result! Catherine Knox, the Chair of the Hornsby Kuring Gai's Women's Refuge came to speak to us at our last business meeting of the year and told us that the funds will be used to help the residents access much needed psychological support, which many of them are not able to pay for as they do not have access to Medicare cards as many of them are asylum seekers and refugees.

The club has been supporting the women's shelter for 10 years since it opened and has raised an impressive \$82,000 in that time.

**SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL** is the leading international volunteer organisation for women working through service projects to educate, enable and empower the lives of women and girls worldwide.

For further information please contact Pam on 0425 229 615 or visit the organisation's website [siseap.org](http://siseap.org).



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## Nepean Physie Club Family Duo Sally, Lucy Dazzle

### LYN LAMONT SENSATIONAL IN OVER 70S

BY LAWRENCE MACHADO

Sally Lamplough of Nepean Physie Club is a tough act to follow when it comes to the dance sport known as Physie. She is now the Overall Ladies Champion in Australia, making her the best ladies' competitor in the country, having won back-to-back national titles.

Sally, known for her vibrant energy and passion, delivered a flawless performance in the ladies final, after winning Overall Ladies Grand Champion in 2023. Sally's ability to connect with the audience through her performance is a testament to her hard work and love for Physie, said Kim Annesley, the head teacher at the Nepean Physie Club.

Lyn Lamont was sensational in the over 70s section and proves that women of any age can get out there and dance, said a proud Kim.

"Sally's achievement at the national finals is not only a personal triumph but also an inspiration to her classmates and students that she teaches," Kim said.

Adding to the Blaxland family's joy was Lucy Lamplough who took out the 11 Years title, making them the only mother and daughter

champions at the 2024 national championships in December.

"Competing against many beautiful Physie girls, Lucy's performance was a delightful mix of enthusiasm and skill," Kim said. "Her ability to execute complex routines with confidence earned her first place in Australia in the 11 years section."

"It is very exciting for mother and daughter to win in the same year," said Kim Annesley, the head teacher at the Nepean Physie Club, which has centres in McGraths Hill, Londonderry and Werrington.

The club cleaned up more national titles while also bringing home silver and bronze medals which boosted the individual rankings.

Glenhaven local Lyn Lamont is a very inspiring role model for the older participants, being unbeatable in the over 70s category. Lyn has been a stalwart in the Physie community for many years.

"Her dedication to the sport is evident not just in her performances but also in her passion for everything to do with Physie," Kim said. "At the Nationals, Lyn showcased her skills with five



The champion Nepean Physie Club junior teams

routines that perfectly-blended grace, strength, expression, and technical precision, earning her first place on the podium.

"We are over the moon with the wonderful success as a club in 2024, with great results in both the individual and team section. Our 9 & 10-year and 11 & 12-year teams took out the Overall Trophy in A Grade."

**The club is also celebrating the success of other high achievers at the nationals:**

Baulkham Hills local Adele McGuinness runner-up in the Over 60s to be ranked second in Australia; 17-year-old Ellerie Armstrong of Kurrajong ranks second in Australia; Mackenzie Tolar, 19, of Stanhope Gardens, ranks third in Australia; Bonnie Prydacz, 13, Blaxland East, is third and Melinda Prydacz of Blaxland East, is ranked fourth in the Over 40s.

## Keane Wins Dural Bowling Club Event

Mike Keane defeated Phil Laing at Dural Bowling Club's last competition for 2024.

The day started with a game of scrungers where players were divided up into groups of four to a rink. Each rink players played an individual game against the others. Each player had three bowls and the closest bowls scored three points, the second two points and the third one point.

It was a fun and entertaining morning on December 14. After the game of scrungers was completed, the players joined the other bowlers



The Dural Bowling Club players at their last event for December 2024.

who had elected to skip the morning games for lunch in the dining room. The first competition for the New Year was held on Saturday, January 4.

Anyone interested in playing bowls, please contact Robert on 0411375580.

# Craft Alive

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Nikkita Fazzari and Sarah Easthope with the Australian team.  
Picture courtesy: WS Wanderers

# Hills Stars Fazzari, Easthope Power Australia into Asian Futsal Finals

BY LAWRENCE MACHADO

Nikkita Fazzari is just 17 and already is making her mark in international Futsal. The Dural Warriors forward scored five goals as Australia finished unbeaten in the recent AFC Women's Futsal Asian Cup Qualifiers in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Fellow Dural Warrior and seasoned goalkeeper Sarah Easthope, also showed her skills as Australia defeated four rivals to advance to the Asian Cup finals. Sarah, a stalwart with Hills United FC, pulled some fine saves throughout the tournament underlining her form and commitment.

Nikkita, the youngest player in the Australian side, had the honour of scoring the team's first goal in the second minute - a stunning effort from

the left flank against Turkmenistan. She scored a second as Australia romped home in style.

Nikkita was again on target in the 5-0 victory over Kuwait in their second match. She then netted a brace, including an absolute cracking first goal, as the Australians qualified for the AFC Futsal Women's Asian Cup 2025, by beating the hosts Uzbekistan 3-1.

Nikkita, who represents the North West Sydney Spirit FC in the NSW NPL Women's League, is one of the rising female footballers in NSW. Judging by her composure and outstanding goals during her Futsal debut for Australia, she could become a regular for the country.

Australia, playing their first Futsal qualification competition, defeated The Philippines 2-1 in their last group game. Uzbekistan go through to the Asian finals as the Group C runners-up while The Philippines went through as the best third-placed team.

Thailand and Bahrain qualified from Group A, Indonesia and Hong Kong from Group B while Vietnam and Chinese Taipei are the Group D qualifiers. They will join hosts China, defending champs Iran and Japan in the finals to be staged from May 6-17. The draw will be held on February 7.



Nikkita Fazzari, right, celebrates after scoring against Uzbekistan.  
Picture Courtesy Football Australia.

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What better way than to spend a packed few hours on a Sunday? Find us at the corner of Elizabeth Macarthur Drive and Norwest Boulevard, Bella Vista. 9am-2pm.

[www.thehills.nsw.gov.au/Upcoming-Events-Activities/Bella-Vista-Farm-Open-Day](http://www.thehills.nsw.gov.au/Upcoming-Events-Activities/Bella-Vista-Farm-Open-Day)

# A SHINE ON AUSTRALIA

Arriving from Scotland in 1878, John and Margaret Ramsay settled in Melbourne with their four children. Within 10 years, having amassed a fortune in real estate, they built the glorious mansion in Essendon named Clydebank which now forms part of the Ave Maria college.

One of their sons, William, was very entrepreneurial and along with Hamilton McKellan, during the early 1900s, established a two-roomed factory at Carlton, an inner suburb of Melbourne, where they tried to manufacture various products ranging from disinfectants to eczema ointments.

They struck gold in 1906 when they started to manufacture boot polish. As William's wife, Annie Elizabeth Meek, was from New Zealand, he decided to name the product "Kiwi Boot Polish". William Ramsay also aided in spreading knowledge of the product by loading boxes onto his horse-drawn cart and travelled around the country selling directly to farmers, who bought the product to protect their boots.

Kiwi had rivals including, in Sydney, a brand named "Cobra" which ran a series of cartoon advertisements, which, in today's environment, would be frowned upon. The advertisements featured a character named "Chunder Loo of Akim Foo". As many would know the word "Chunder" in Australian slang means "to vomit" and so using rhyming slang could conceive "Chunder Loo" as "Chunder Spew".

Another rival product scored a significant victory when a photo of William Ramsay and Hamilton McKellan, taken in their shop in Elizabeth

St, Melbourne in 1909, featured a billboard advertising "Nugget" boot polish in the photo.

Whilst boot polish had been around since at least 1851, there was no local production in Victoria. Kiwi boot polish soon became very popular as it had a superior formula to other brands as it preserved shoe leather, made it shine and restored colour. Further improvements by 1908 added suppleness and water resistance. The success of Kiwi Boot Polish in Australia came to the notice of the British and US Armies who awarded contracts for the supply of the product to their forces during World War 1.

William died of cancer in 1914 and his father, John, then took charge and headed a large sales team in the UK. A factory was opened at Ealing in England which exported Kiwi product to various countries in Europe and the Middle East. As sales increased, further factories and sales offices were opened, including one at Rouen, France which was bombed in World War II and co-opted by the Nazis for their own boots.

In the middle of the war years of 1914-1918, Kiwi also made a silent film depicting two boys shining a hotel guest's shoes after the adult staff had enlisted to fight in the war. The film was produced in 1916 and shown in movie houses (cinemas).

After the Second World War, William's son travelled around the world promoting Kiwi and

opened factories from Kenya to Singapore. This soon led to "Kiwi" becoming a generic name similar to the use of "Hoover" which, in the UK, is used to describe a vacuum cleaner. Kiwi became a verb within Malay speakers meaning "to polish shoes".

The company, through much of its life, has contained the name "Kiwi" within its corporate name. It started in 1906 as McKellan & Ramsay, changing in 1913 - 1916 to Kiwi Boot Polish Co. In 1916, a slight name change to the Kiwi Polish Co, by which it was known until 1971 when a merger took place between Kiwi and Nicholas International Ltd, a Melbourne based pharmaceutical company who were best known as the manufacturers of "Aspro" and "Rennies". The company was then renamed Nicholas Kiwi Ltd. In 1984 Nicholas Kiwi was taken over by American based Consolidated Foods Corporation (now known as Sara Lee Corporation). Sara Lee then went on to acquire other companies in the shoe care business, so much so that both the US and UK governments became concerned over what seemed to be, in April 2011, a potential monopoly of the industry and they were ordered to divest part of their operations. The Kiwi business was sold to S.C. Johnson.

## ALIVE WITH MUSIC

BY LEONIE DIXON

At ALIVE we have so many different programs to listen to including travel, health, arts, interviews, cultural shows and of course music. Our music shows are so diverse that many will be featured over the next few issues.

One of the most successful shows in terms of listeners is the Australian Spectrum Show with Ross M Fear as his weekly featured Australian artists reach national Australian streaming listeners in every state and territory as well as significant international listeners. Over the first year Ross tightened the format of the show and the pre-production of the podcasts to remove local sponsorship announcements, so the podcast of the show is more relevant

to interstate and international listeners. Each episode is an artist special with interviews, the artist's latest album and then a selection of tunes from their body of professionally recorded works. Ross used to bring acts to Australia so he has plenty of contacts in the music industry and his shows are booked out months in advance. He has been broadcasting 100% Australian music for over 15 years and his well-known guests have included Brian



Cadd, Men At Work, Australian Crawl and Mental As Anything. For many up and coming bands new to the industry, Australian Spectrum has provided them with a springboard into large audiences. Why not tune in next Tuesday night from 9-12pm.

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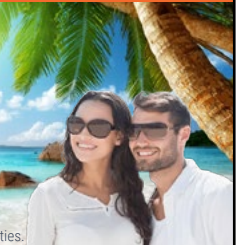
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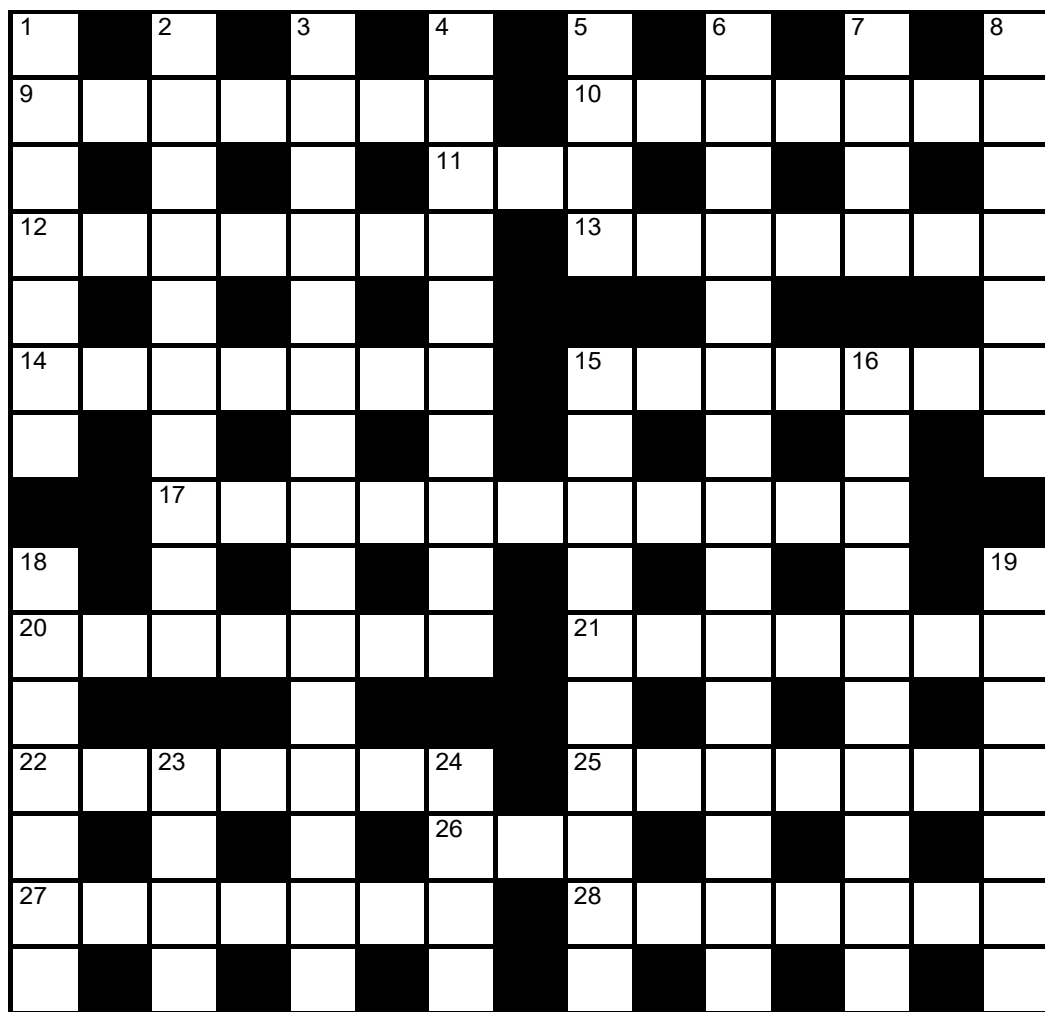
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### Across

9. Swagging 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
20. Loser
21. Drink cooler
22. Ornate wardrobe cabinet
25. Fascinate
26. Pillage
27. Swag
28. Bludgers

### Down

1. Inflammation
2. Oil alternative
3. Periodical item
4. Footballer who won the Brownlow Medal three times
5. "Original Sin" band
6. Tiny central Australian nocturnal flyer
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

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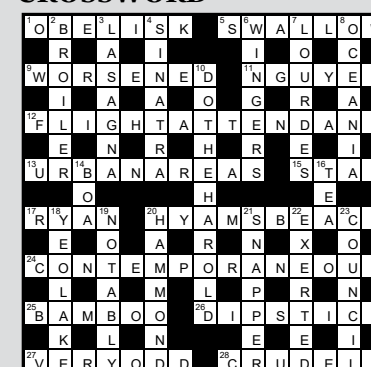
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Answers from last issue

## WORD SEARCH



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