

Hills to Hawkesbury

Community News | 07th – 21st March 2025 | Volume 42 – Issue 05
Local Stories, Local Events, Local People and Local Businesses

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The Fellowship of First Fleeters

CHAPTER - HAWKESBURY-NEPEAN

The Hawkesbury-Nepean Chapter was officially formed 10 years ago on May 9th, 2015. Many interesting discussions about what to call the Chapter with suggestions such as Green Hills which was the original name of the Windsor settlement. The homepage photo on the website: www.fffhnc.com of the Hawkesbury/Nepean Rivers and the lower Blue Mountains, depicts the area and so the name Hawkesbury-Nepean Chapter was chosen.

The committee is enthusiastic and experienced and meets prior to Chapter meetings working hard to invite interesting speakers as well as organising excursions in the area. Upcoming visits include Belmont House on Saturday, 8th March, North Richmond and Combewood House, Penrith.

Hawkesbury-Nepean Chapter has grown to around 70 members, many of whom are descendants of those arriving on the First Fleet in 1788. However, you don't have to have a convict heritage to attend events. Find out more on www.fffhnc.com

Meetings are held bi-monthly on the second Saturday in venues that cover the geographical breadth of the Chapter. However, most meetings are held in the Tebbutt Room at Hawkesbury Regional Library in Windsor. Morning tea is provided from 10.30am and a short formal meeting follows around 11am before the guest speaker presents his/her talk. Past topics have included State Archives, Land Titles, Hawkesbury Museum and Rookwood Cemetery.

All are welcome, so we hope to see you soon!



Wearable Art

Barely Wearable is an exciting exhibition of 30 wearable artworks made from everyday materials such as single use objects such as coffee pods, rubber bands, and surgical masks that would have otherwise be discarded to landfill.

This Sunday, 9th March, artist Ruth Downes will be at Hawkesbury Regional Gallery to present an insightful talk about Barely Wearable which tackles the themes of waste and overconsumption.

Hawkesbury Regional Gallery is the final stop in the exhibition's 14-gallery, five-year tour of NSW, Queensland and Victoria, making this talk a rare opportunity to learn about these works direct from the artist.

Barely Wearable is showing at Hawkesbury Regional Gallery until Sunday, 16th March. Hawkesbury Regional Gallery is located at the Deerubbin Centre, 300 George Street Windsor. Opening hours are Monday, Wednesday to Friday 10am – 4pm, Saturday and Sunday 10am – 3pm.

Artist Talk: Sunday 9th March, 1pm – 3pm
Light refreshments provided.

Bookings essential: <https://Ruth-Downes-Artist-Talk.eventbrite.com>



Ruth Downes, Masking the problem, 2019-2022, disposable face masks, coated wire, pva glue.
Photo by James Brickwood.

THE HILLS FRIENDSHIP CLUB

The Hills Friendship Club is looking for new members to join our friendly mature social community group that meets on the second Tuesday of each month at Wesley (Castle Hill) Uniting Church Hall, Showground Road, Castle Hill at 10.30am. Our club enjoys day outings, lunches, plus a monthly bus trip to places in Sydney or further afield every third Wednesday.

If you are interested in joining our friendly club and making new friends please contact; Maree Jones (President) 0421 410 305 or Sue Austin (Secretary) 0411 274 582 or email saustin7@optusnet.com.au



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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ATF Paton Family Trust

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 or click on the QR code.



Norwest Sales Smash Record

BY BEV JORDAN

The record price for an apartment in the Hills has been smashed not once, but twice by a substantial amount with two Norwest penthouses selling off market for over \$6.5million each.

Both four-bedroom penthouse apartments are in Mulpha's Banksia apartment building in Norwest Quarter. The previous apartment record in the Hills District was set in September 2023 when a four-bedroom sub-penthouse sold off the plan for \$3.7m at Infinity Park Norwest by Hitchin.

Mulpha Head of Developments, Tim Spencer says interest in the penthouses has largely been from downsizers from the Hills District who want to stay in the Hills to be close to family, friends and sporting clubs including nearby Castle Hill Country Club.

The remaining four penthouses, including the second garden penthouse, will be released for sale on Saturday March 8th. Mulpha says they will be ready to move into in Spring 2025. The interiors have been crafted by award-winning architect Richard Archer

Tim Spencer said: "The fact that we have been able to secure two of the six penthouse sales before they are released to market is testament to our understanding of the growing demand for quality design, materials and craftsmanship in the top-end Hills market. We are extremely excited to be delivering such properties and responding to the needs of the community."

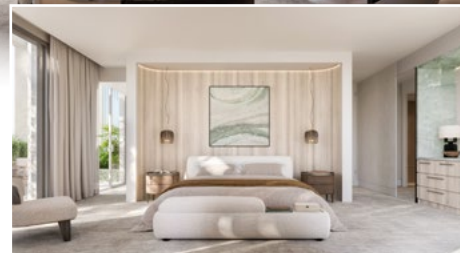
Residents can access a resort-style heated mineral pool, sunlit garden sanctuary and function room, as well as the bespoke community shops, eateries and a commercial gym with activities deck within the building.

Banksia will be positioned around an open plaza featuring a wild botanical forest, timber walkways, water and wild play for kids, decked areas, and seating.

Architecture firm Bates Smart designed the building and focused on creating high amenity apartments that connect to the outdoors. Matthew Allen, Director, Bates Smart, said:

"Our design concept for Banksia integrates landscape and architecture so that people can feel that they're living in nature. We wanted to design an apartment building that is green, flexible and inviting to residents.

"We maximised access to natural light, fresh air and usable living space, both inside and outside. The balconies are particularly special. They are oversized and feel private due to their integrated plantings. The greenery will eventually cascade over the planters as it grows and will visually tie the apartments to the lushness of the public plaza, retail terraces and

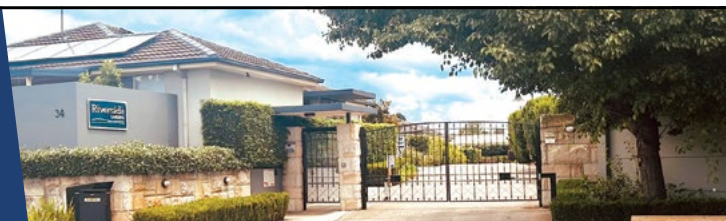


beautiful communal gardens on the building's podium levels."

The plans for the entire Norwest Quarter precinct propose a major mixed-use development for over 2,000 residents who will live amongst 26,000m² of green open space. Encompassed within the landscape will be eight residential towers containing 864 apartments, and up to 6,000m² of space provided for cafes, restaurants, neighbourhood shops and childcare facilities.

Seventy percent of apartments in the first stage (Lacebark and Banksia) have also sold to date. To register your interest in Banksia in Norwest Quarter, contact the sales team on 1300 103 580 or visit the new fully furnished 2-bedroom display apartments at Mulpha Sales and Experience Centre at 36 Solent Circuit, Norwest.

Riverside GARDENS



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FOUR ANGELS LAW

Police from the Hawkesbury Highway Patrol were patrolling Railway Road North in Mulgrave on Saturday, 22nd February when they detected a white Holden Captiva travelling at a speed of 85kph in a signposted 50kph speed-enforced area.

The male driver was subjected to a breath test which was positive. Roadside testing for drugs also showed positive for illicit drugs.

He was arrested and taken to Windsor Police Station for secondary testing, where his breath analysis was recorded at 0.160 grams of alcohol in 210 milli-litres of breath (high range). He was subjected to a second oral fluid test for drugs and tested positive for cocaine.

The driver was charged with the "Four Angels Law" Driving with a high range prescribed concentration of alcohol (PCA) and the presence of a prescribed illicit drug. He was also charged with exceeding the speed limit by more than 30kph. He is due before Windsor Local Court later this month.

The "Four Angels Law" was in response to the tragic death of four children (Anthony, Angelina, Sienna Abdulla, and Veronique Sakr) who were killed when a drunk driver mounted the footpath in Oatlands in February 2020.

DRIVING ON DRUGS

Hills Highway Patrol stopped a white MG SUV for speeding on the M2 Motorway, Baulkham Hills just after 1am on 22nd February. The 26-year-old male driver was clocked at 147 km/h in a 100 km/h zone. Police say the driver allegedly provided false details and was found to be breaching his bail conditions. A roadside breath test returned a negative result, but an oral fluid test indicated the presence of both cannabis and cocaine. He was charged with driving with an illicit drug in his system.

OPERATION AMAROK

Hills Police participated in the state-wide Operation Amarok, with a number of DV-related arrests and charges, including seven assaults, two breach AVO, as well as attending over 25 other domestic disputes. Police also conducted a large number of AVO Compliance and bail checks on defendants.

BREAK AND ENTER

Between 2nd March 7pm and 3rd March 4am a suspect allegedly entered a residential property at Bridgewood Dr, Beaumont Hills through an open garage door.

The suspect stole keys from inside the dwelling and subsequently took a 2024 BMW Coupe from outside the home.

Police are keen to speak with anyone who may have information about this incident. Contact Crime Stoppers NSW at 1800 333 000.

NAZI SWASTIKA ON CHEST

A man has been charged with allegedly displaying a Nazi swastika outside a war memorial on Wright's Rd Castle Hill after Police were called to the Centenary of ANZAC Reserve at about 7pm on Monday, 24th February.

Officers attached to Castle Hill Police Area Command arrived to find a 31-year-old man with a Nazi swastika drawn on his chest. He was arrested and charged with knowingly display by public act Nazi symbol without excuse. The man was granted strict conditional bail to appear before Parramatta Local Court on Wednesday, 19th March 2025.

The NSW Police Force takes hate crimes seriously and encourages anyone who is the victim of a hate crime or witnesses a hate crime to report the matter to police through Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or through Triple Zero (000) in an emergency.

FALLEN TREE

In the middle of Friday's heat, 28th February, volunteers attended to a fallen tree blocking an entire road in Castle Hill and blocking access to about 20 houses.

SES volunteers responded quickly to the scene and cleared the road, which took over two hours to clear. While the car was damaged, no person was inside it when the large branch broke and fell on it.

METRO PATROLS

Due to an increase in anti-social behaviour by young people at Metro Train Stations in the past weeks, the Hills Police and Police Transport Command will be stepping up patrols at the Metro Stations within the Hills District Police will speak to groups of teenagers loitering for long periods of time. Anyone found with weapons will be arrested and prosecuted. If you see any large groups of people loitering at these locations, call 131 444 to request a patrol to be dispatched.

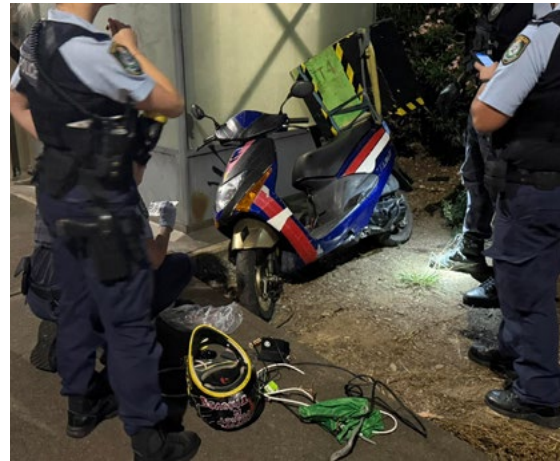
DRINK DRIVING

A Kellyville woman has been charged with High Range drink driving following a crash on Wednesday, 26th February at about 4.40pm.

Police say the female driver of a Jeep was involved in a minor crash with another vehicle at the President and Green Rd roundabout.

Both drivers went through the roundabout, stopped on Roseberry Road. The Jeep driver collided with the gutter, causing the near side front tyre to deflate.

Police breath tested the Jeep driver, a 40-year-old female from Kellyville, who returned a positive reading. At Castle Hill Police Station she underwent a breath analysis, which returned a reading in the High Range. Her driver's licence was immediately suspended. She is due to appear before Parramatta Local Court.



TRESPASSING

A 57-year-old man was arrested at 1am in the morning on Wednesday, 27th February, after police responded to a construction site alarm at Norwest. A PolAir Helicopter also attended the scene. He was charged with: Enter Enclosed Lands, Goods in Custody x2 Possess Housebreaking Implements, Display Altered Numberplate.

SWITCH-A-ROO

A 28-year-old man has been issued a court attendance notice to Parramatta Local Court on 10th April for driving while disqualified. Police allege he was driving a white Hyundai i30 hatchback at about 6.30pm on Friday, 28th February eastbound on Memorial Ave, Kellyville, the vehicle approached a yellow traffic light at the intersection of Arnold Avenue.

Police alleged the driver proceeded through the light, which turned red before the vehicle crossed. Police, who were using an unmarked Highway Patrol Vehicle, activated all warning lights and sirens, causing the driver to stop on Memorial Ave, Kellyville.

Police say they observed a male driver in the driver's seat, and what appeared to be a female with hair in a ponytail was seated in the front passenger seat.

Police observed through the rear window of the Hyundai that the male driver removed his seatbelt, climbed over the centre console and sat in the back seat. The female passenger climbed over the centre console and sat in the driver's seat.

The police claim it was clearly captured on the crystal-clear high-definition in-car video.

Officers approached the driver's side window and spoke to the male seated in the vehicle's back seat. The male and female were the only occupants in the vehicle.

The male repeatedly denied being the driver of the vehicle, while the female repeatedly stated to police that she was driving at the time. Checks on the male's licence confirmed he was disqualified from driving. The male was alcohol and drug tested, providing negative results to both.

Castle Hill Local Woman of the Year 2025

Carol Baker-Dersch has been named Castle Hill's Local Woman of the Year for 2025 in recognition of her outstanding contributions, leadership, and lifelong commitment to the Hills community. With over 30 years of dedicated volunteer service, Carol's impact can be felt across numerous organisations, improving lives, and strengthening community ties.

For over 30 years, Carol has been a prominent member of Soroptimist International of The Hills District, a global network focused on empowering women and girls through education, advocacy, and social initiatives. Her leadership within the organisation includes serving as Regional President, Club President, and Regional Representative. Under her guidance, Soroptimist International has undertaken projects aimed at fostering gender equality, supporting vulnerable women, and driving meaningful change in the local community.

Since 2006, Carol has been an active member and is currently Secretary of the Friends of Bella Vista Farm, an historic landmark in the Hills District. She has been instrumental in organising educational historical tours to share the farm's rich heritage, coordinating fundraising events, including the popular Devonshire teas on Open Days, and hosting community gatherings to encourage public engagement with local history. Her

dedication has helped preserve this important site and make history accessible to future generations.

Carol extends her compassion to the caring community as a Yellow Lady volunteer at Sydney Adventist Hospital. In this role, she provides emotional support, companionship, and assistance to patients and their families during difficult times. Her kindness and dedication bring comfort to many, embodying the true spirit of selfless service.

As Secretary of the Castle Hill Agricultural Society, Carol plays a key role in promoting local farming and agricultural education. She is a driving force behind the Youth Agricultural Expo, an initiative designed to inspire young people to engage in farming and understand its significance in Australian heritage. Her efforts ensure the success of local agricultural events and foster appreciation for the industry.

Carol Baker-Dersch's enduring commitment to the Hills District is a shining example of volunteerism and leadership. Her tireless



Congratulations to CAROL BAKER-DERSCH, our Castle Hill Local Woman of the Year for 2025!

contributions across various sectors, from community service to heritage conservation and youth engagement, have left a lasting positive impact. The Castle Hill Electorate congratulates Carol Baker-Dersch, Castle Hill's Local Woman of the Year for 2025. Carol received her award on Thursday, 6th March at the Convention Centre at Darling Harbour.

To learn more about the NSW Women of the Year Awards program and watch the livestream, visit <https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/women-nsw/awards-and-events/nsw-women-of-year-awards>. To learn more about Hidden Treasures visit <https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/women-nsw/rural-womens-network/hidden-treasures-honour-roll>.

Find the right school for your child at the Hills Schools Expo

The Hills Schools Expo will be held on Saturday & Sunday March 15-16, 10am – 4pm, at Castle Hill RSL.

Why drive all over the city, looking for a good school, when the schools can come to you?

This free event is a great opportunity to make direct contact with teachers and principals from 22 of Australia's best independent schools in a spacious, air-conditioned venue.

North Western Sydney has long been home to a huge variety of excellent schools, offering a diverse range of facilities and teaching styles. Now, thanks to the new Metro North West train line and expanded school bus services, families have easy access to more schools than ever.

Boarding, either weekly or throughout the term, is another increasingly popular option, particularly for older students.

The Hills Schools Expo is an important resource for local families. Parents can cut through the noise to get a real feel for a school's values and culture. This is vital because independent schools do more than teach. They are also tasked with upholding the values of their school communities and passing them on to the next generation.

Every school has its strengths. The right school for your child is the one where they can succeed personally as well as academically. The Expo can help you find that school. Exhibitors at this year's

event include single-sex, co-ed, and faith-based schools from kindergarten to senior high school, including boarding schools in the city, ACT and TAS.

At the Expo, parents are invited to engage in detailed discussions with school staff to deeply explore a school's offerings and suitability for their child. From information on scholarships to extracurricular opportunities and specialised programs for gifted and talented students, families can learn everything they need to know to take the next step in their school search.

You can conduct days of research in a single outing while also establishing a personal connection with your school of choice. Every child is unique. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to find the school to which your child is uniquely suited.

For more information visit: schoolsexpo.com.au



Hills Schools Expo

Saturday 15th & Sunday 16th March 2025, 10am-4pm
Castle Hill RSL, 77 Castle St Castle Hill | Free Entry

Looking for the right school for your child?
 Don't miss the Hills Schools Expo! Showcasing
 Australia's leading Independent Day & Boarding, Single
 Sex & Co-ed Schools from Pre-K through to Year 12.

schoolsexpo.com.au

**Helping
 you find the
 right school
 for your
 child**

Hills Toastmasters' 50th

It's a golden age for public speaking in the Hills with The Hills District Toastmasters Club (HDTM) celebrating its 50th anniversary on 1st April (we kid you not).

The golden moment will be celebrated by members at a gathering starting at 7pm. At its usual meeting place at Restore Church, 47 Britannia Road, Castle Hill.

The club is inviting former members and people associated with the club via Youth Leadership and Speechcraft to come along and join the celebrations.

The Club was formed in 1974 and has continually operated for over 50 years, holding more than 1200 meetings. The Club is a not for profit, community organisation focused on fostering and improving communication skills for its members and the general public.

HDTM is part of a worldwide organisation, Toastmasters International, which has over 14,000 clubs worldwide and plenty of online training resources for members.

President of the Hills District Toastmasters, Immanuel Selvaraj, said: "Fifty years ago, face-to-face communication was the primary way people interacted, making public speaking an essential skill for success. However, with the rise of digital communication, such as emails, texting, and social media, many now view public speaking as less relevant.

"As a result, younger generations are fast losing their ability at verbal communication and

public speaking – they are becoming less confident in personal interaction. Despite these changes, public speaking remains a crucial skill, particularly for leadership and effective mass communication. Whether addressing a crowd, leading a team, or delivering a presentation, the ability to speak confidently and persuasively is still essential in today's world."

So if you feel you need to improve your personal communication with your family, in your community and workplace ... HDTM members say they have the answer for you.

The Club's longest serving member Barry Haywood said: he was advised to join Toastmasters as part of his career development and joined in July 1981.

"I had serious communication problems ... I found that Toastmasters not only solved my original communication problems but improved my personal, social and community communications," he said.

"I have met a large group of people from all walks of life focused on improvement."

He says he would recommend anyone with a strong desire to improve their personal communication skills to join toastmasters.



HDTM Executive Sharon Richards, Terry Swan, Dilvan Bircan, Barry Hayward and Lisa Tashe.

Toastmasters' members pay low fees and enjoy a relaxed club atmosphere and support from experienced members. Each meeting includes Table Topics (developing skills in impromptu speaking), Prepared Speeches (helping develop organisational skills), Evaluations (developing effective listening and positive feedback) and Chairmanship (helping with leadership and effective participation at meetings).

The Club welcomes all visitors. Meetings are held fortnightly on Tuesdays from 7.15pm to 9.30pm at Restore Church, 47 Britannia Road, Castle Hill.

The club is not affiliated with a church or political organisation.

For further information contact Terry Swan at vpe-3180@toastmastersclubs.org.

School Infrastructure NSW Department of Education

Public notice

Notice of exhibition of a proposed school development



Proposal:

Construction and operation of a new government school and preschool, including buildings and structures, landscaping, sport and play spaces, and associated supporting infrastructure as described in the Review of Environmental Factors (REF).

Applicant:

Department of Education

Location:

1 Pennant Way, Gables NSW 2765 (Lot 301 DP 1287967 on Fontana Drive, Gables)

Exhibition details:

The proposal will be on public exhibition from Tuesday 25 February 2025 to Monday 24 March 2025. During this period, community members are invited to review the REF which describes the proposed development, potential environmental impacts and proposed mitigation measures, and provide feedback via the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure Division 5.1 planning portal. A link to the Planning Portal is included on the department's project webpage available at the weblink or QR code below.

Information and feedback

For further information contact School Infrastructure on:

Website: edu.nsw.link/GablesPS

Phone: 1300 482 651

Email: schoolinfrastructure@det.nsw.edu.au



FREE event



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trilogycare.com.au/events | 07 2112 0220



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out and about

with **MICHELLE BYRNE**

Bella Vista Pocket Park

With the rising cost of living there is increased pressure on families to find activities and events to enjoy without breaking the bank. However, when you scratch beneath the surface, it's amazing what events and activities you can find, and often for free.

A great example is the events held at Bella Vista Pocket Park. As part of the Landcom's Sydney Metro North West place making program, regular events are run here for free. The aim of the program is to create welcoming neighbourhoods and public places whilst building a sense of community.

Every Wednesday morning, during school term, local dance school, Stage Door Performing Arts operates a free weekly dance class for pre-schoolers. Run by teachers trained at the Australian Teachers of Dancing, these free classes introduce children to the exciting world of dance, as well as helping them to develop their motor skills and musicality, whilst promoting social and emotional growth.

Whilst the children enjoy their dance class, The Stage Door Café located next to the Pocket Park, provides an opportunity for parents and

caregivers to enjoy a coffee and to connect with other local families at the same time.

For those who are time poor and looking for a good work out, then Live Life Get Active fitness classes provides the chance to participate in free sessions every morning at 9:30am, during school term. Sessions include cross-training, yoga, and boxing. Everyone regardless of fitness level can participate with adaptable exercises and well-trained instructors, connect with others in the community, have fun whilst improving fitness levels and enjoying all the health benefits that come with being active.

Learn to Skate with Totem Skate at Bella Vista Pocket Park is becoming increasingly popular and is the perfect activity to get the kids out of the house and off their devices. Free skate workshops are held with Totem Skate on the first Saturday of March, April, September, October and November. Designed for kids aged 6+, who are either beginners or looking to improve their skills, these workshops create a supportive space to develop confidence on a skateboard. Helmets, skateboards, elbow, and knee pads are provided on the day, if

needed, so there is literally no cost to participate.

Other special activities run at Bella Vista Pocket from time to time include things such as Diwali Celebrations, free movie nights, Tasty of Diversity and free learn to ride classes. These enjoyable events are also well worth attending with family and friends.

Located at the Southern end of the Metro Station, Bella Vista Pocket Park is a great place to meet with friends, go for a walk, enjoy a coffee and bite from the Stage Door Café and take the opportunity to participate in one of the free activities organised by Landcom as part of the Sydney Metro North West place making program.

For more information on activities at Bella Vista Pocket Park including registration go to www.metrnorthwestplaces.landcom.com.au/whats-on/bella-vista-pocket-park



Artist's Impression

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

Retire with more in Bella Vista

Invitation-only event: Tuesday 25 March

Join Aveo's First Release Club for an exclusive invitation to the Corymbia Residences launch event. Receive floor plans, pricing, early access to tour our stunning new display apartments, plus priority selection to place an expression of interest before public release.

Embrace an exceptional lifestyle at **Bella Vista Haven**, with one, two, and three-bedroom apartments, limited penthouses, and more resident amenities like an indoor heated pool, library, and cinema.

With demand high and places limited, now is the time to act. Retire with more at Bella Vista Haven.

Bella Vista Haven
Retirement Living

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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.



Life's just better

We invite you to our Open Day at RSL LifeCare Cherrybrook Gardens and Lakes of Cherrybrook, where you can explore our vibrant communities and experience the lifestyle our residents enjoy. Come along for a delightful morning with:

- ✕ Freshly brewed coffee from our coffee cart
- ✕ A delicious morning tea



Join us and see what makes Cherrybrook Communities a wonderful place to call home!

RSL LifeCare Cherrybrook Gardens
10 Casuarina Drive, Cherrybrook NSW 2126
Friday, 21st March, 10am to 2pm

RSL LifeCare Lakes of Cherrybrook
10 Kenburn Avenue, Cherrybrook NSW 2126
Wednesday, 26th March, 10am to 12pm



Call 0460 405 084 or scan to
RSVP to our Open Day today



Call 0460 405 084 or scan to
RSVP to our Open Day today

Tara Palffy with Remy (RuffTrack) Katherine Pinczuk (MindLight) with Boris, Clr Jane Grevtseva, Dr Padmini Howpage, Clr Mila Kasby with Ginger, Cr Immanuel Selvaraj, Cr Reena Jethi with Soda and Don Camileri (RuffTrack)



PAWSITIVE FESTIVAL

BY BEV JORDAN

A dog friendly festival is being held at Rouse Hill Town Centre on Sunday, March 23rd with a focus on mental health and the importance of pets to boost wellbeing.

Organised by the Mind Connections Foundation, the Festival will run from 9am to 2pm and will feature stalls plus dog events such as puppy pilates and a dog fashion show.

It is the 14th year that Pawsitive Steps has been held and is growing every year.

This year the dogs and handlers involved with the RuffTrack program which uses dogs as companions in its work with "at risk" youth, will also be involved in the event.

Psychiatrist, Dr Padmini Howpage, founder of the Pawsitive Steps Festival, said: "The Pawsitive Steps annual event has proven one thing—dogs are the best therapists, and they work for belly rubs!

"From stress relief to unconditional love, our furry friends boost mental health in ways science and tail wags confirm."

Her family's dog Coco arrived as a six week old abandoned puppy at a time when her 24 year-old daughter was facing treatment for cancer.

She said on her daughter's hardest days Coco never left her side.

"She curled up at her feet during treatments, rested her head in her lap when nausea from chemotherapy was overwhelming and nudged her hand when the silent grief of losing her hair became unbearable."

Coco held the family together by making them step out for walks when they couldn't

bear to face the world and "when the tears came, she was always there, offering the silent, unconditional love only a dog could give.

"Coco was never just a pet. She was family.

She was love. And even now, at 14 years old, she continues to enjoy the company of the hearts she healed, the lives she touched, and the home she made whole again," Dr Howpage said.

Director with the Mind Connections Foundation, Cynthia Payne said: "At the Mind Connections Foundation, we recognise the profound impact that dogs have on our mental health.

"They offer unconditional love, companionship, and a sense of purpose, acting as steadfast allies in our journey toward emotional well-being. This event highlights the transformative power of pets, reminding us of the healing

connections that bind us and the joy that comes from these incredible bonds."

Dr Howpage said that according to new research carried out by the American Psychiatric Association and the American Veterinary Association 65 per cent of pet owners say that their animals offer companionship, 65 per cent said they were a "true friend" and 64 per cent said their pet provided them with true love and support.

Festival highlights include a Paws Playdome with sports-based games and exercises to keep you and your dog active.

There will be on stage activities throughout the Festival with MC Nathan Cassar.

The showcase Paws Fashion Show means you can dress up your dog to win \$250 in dog supplies. To register email events@iconcorpevents.com.

There will also be a 30 minute walk for wellbeing and participants are encouraged to dress up.

The variety of stalls include dog service providers, health and fitness experts, mental health organisations and more.

Dr Howpage said: "Our festival encourages a holistic approach to mental health providing an open and welcoming space to visit our stall."

"Mental health has always had a stigma attached to it and by having dogs as ambassadors for mental health normalises the day and creates an exciting family outing.

"It is the only Festival dedicated to celebrating dogs as champions of mental health."



WHAT: PAWSITIVE FESTIVAL

WHERE: Rouse Hill Town Centre, opposite the Metro

WHEN: Sunday, 23rd March from 9am to 2pm.

WEBSITE: Register for the Pets Fashion Pare and the Wellbeing Walk on the website pawsitivesteps.com.au

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Fulfilling A Friends LAST WISHES

Loma MacDonald was a generous and caring lady. Even though she didn't have children of her own, she was surrounded by them throughout her life. She had an unbreakable bond with her best friend, Teresa Pelli, and was close to Teresa's children. For nearly 50 years, Loma and Teresa were as close as family.

Loma and her late husband, Norman, were passionate about helping others. After they retired, they began volunteering at their local hospital. This experience left a profound impact on them, and when it came time to plan their Will, they knew exactly what they wanted to do—leave a gift to support children in need.

"Even though Loma and Norman didn't have children of their own, they always had children in their lives," says Teresa. "They believed in supporting others where they could, and it made sense for them to include a children's charity in their Will."

Loma's generosity extended beyond her lifetime. She wanted to ensure that sick kids would continue to receive the care they need, even after she was gone. When Loma passed away, Teresa, as the executor of her estate, carried out her dear friend's wishes and delivered her final, heartfelt gift to Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation (SCHF).

"It speaks for itself how generous in spirit, generous in her life and in her death, Loma was," Teresa shares. "All she really needed to know was that the children were going to benefit."

Honouring Loma's legacy didn't stop with her gift. Teresa felt so inspired by her friend's generosity that she decided to extend it in her own way—by becoming a volunteer at The Children's Hospital at Westmead. Twice a week, she dedicates her evenings to supporting parents and helping sick kids.

One of the most meaningful aspects of her volunteering is assisting in the Edgar Stephens Ward, where she comforts babies with heart conditions and gives their parents a much-needed break. "The human touch is so important," Teresa says. "Support for parents is more than just nine to five."

Looking back, Teresa realises that managing Loma's estate helped her "connect the dots" to her own calling. "I had been thinking



about volunteering for years," she reflects.

"But it wasn't until I handed over Loma's final donation and attended a hospital tour that I knew—I needed to be part of this."

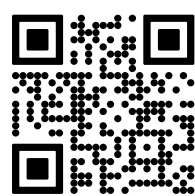
Loma's story is a powerful reminder that the kindness we show today can change the future for sick kids. Whether it's through a generous gift in a Will or dedicating time to help those in need, every act of giving makes a difference.

You can create a legacy of hope and healing by leaving as little as 5% of your estate to SCHF. Your generosity can fund groundbreaking research, life-saving equipment, and support the highest standards of care for sick kids across NSW and beyond.

To learn more about leaving a gift in your Will, call 1800 770 122 or email the Planned Giving Team. plannedgiving@schf.org.au



1 in 2 Australians don't have a valid Will.



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Grand Opening of Ingenia Lifestyle Natura and
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Natura, Poolside Living



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Two Clubhouse Openings. Two Great Communities. Three Big Days of Events!

Join us Friday, 14 March through to Sunday, 16 March as we officially unveil the stunning new clubhouses at Ingenia Lifestyle Natura and Ingenia Lifestyle Element Fullerton Cove for the very first time!

Discover your perfect Port Stephens lifestyle, plus join a seminar and get expert tips from the author of How to Have an Epic Retirement Bec Wilson. It will be a weekend packed with fun celebrations and vibrant community spirit.

Bring the family and kids along for a Family Fun Day on Sunday, where you can explore the stunning communities, enjoy tasty treats and take part in exciting activities such as face painting, leaf artwork and much more.

RSVP to your choice of Grand Opening Weekend activities for you and your family



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Ingenia Lifestyle Natura, Port Stephens

Friday 14th March

Events from 9:30 am - 1:30pm

Sunday 16th March

Family Fun Day 10:00am - 1:00pm

Ingenia Lifestyle Element, Fullerton Cove

Saturday 15th March

Events from 9.30am - 12:30pm

Sunday 16th March

Family Fun Day 10:00am - 1:00pm



RSVP Today.
Scan Below.

HILLS DAILY GRIND CELEBRATES 10 Years of Brewing Community Spirit

BY MICI BEER | EXECUTIVE OFFICER HILLS COMMUNITY AID

This year marks a significant milestone for Hills Daily Grind as we celebrate 10 years of serving up more than just coffee—we've been brewing community connections, empowering local youth, and spreading kindness across Sydney.

Since its inception, Hills Daily Grind has been dedicated to supporting the community through its Youth Skills Up Program (YSuP) and Cafe Connect initiative. Over the past decade, these programs have successfully graduated 235 students from 72 training sessions, providing young people with the barista skills and customer service experience needed to launch their coffee careers. Many of these graduates have gone on to secure employment in the hospitality industry, using their newfound skills as a springboard to brighter futures.

Beyond training, Hills Daily Grind has a heart for giving back. Through our "Kindness Cups" initiative, we have provided hundreds of free coffees to people in need, offering a warm beverage and a gesture of care to those facing tough times.

Our coffee cart has become a familiar sight at major community events across the Hills and beyond. From Relay for Life and the Orange

Blossom Festival to ANZAC Day, NAIDOC Week, and the Glenhaven Christmas Carols, we've been proud to participate in over 50 community events annually. Our team serves an average of 100 kilograms of fresh coffee beans each year, ensuring that Sydney stays caffeinated while fostering community spirit.

None of this would be possible without our incredible volunteers and Cafe Connect participants. Each year, they generously contribute over 1,250 hours of their time, helping us deliver exceptional coffee and meaningful connections wherever we go. Their dedication is the heartbeat of Hills Daily Grind, and we are deeply grateful for their support.

"Reaching our 10-year milestone is a testament to the power of community and the impact we can have when we come together," said Mici Beer, CEO of Hills Community Aid. "We are incredibly proud of the young people we've trained, the kindness we've shared, and the

relationships we've built over the years. Here's to the next decade of making a difference—one cup of coffee at a time."

As we celebrate this exciting milestone, we extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has supported Hills Daily Grind over the years. Whether you've enjoyed a coffee from our cart, volunteered your time, or partnered with us to support community initiatives, you've played a vital role in our journey.

A special thank you to our valued funders—Bankstown Sports Club, ClubGRANTS, Toongabbie Sports Club ClubGRANTS, Deicorp, and the Community Builders Partnership Funding—for your generous support. Your contributions have been instrumental in helping us empower young people and strengthen community connections.



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HARRIS FARM MARKETS UNVEILS NEW STORE IN DURAL, SYDNEY



Australian independent food retailer, Harris Farm Markets, has unveiled the opening of its newest store in Dural, Sydney on Wednesday, 26 February.

"At Harris Farm Markets Dural, we are committed to offering a shopping experience like no other under one roof," says Harris Farm Markets. "Continuing our commitment to being more market than supermarket, the new Dural store will be a haven for food lovers, offering a vibrant marketplace experience with the freshest fruits and vegetables, quality cuts of meats, artisanal cheeses, and a curated selection of local and international grocery sourced across Australia and beyond, all at competitive prices."

The new store includes:

Bonfire Bakery: Freshly baked bread and pastries.

Fish In The Family: The freshest seafood selection.

"We're excited to open our doors in Dural and become part of this wonderful community," says Luke Harris, co-CEO of Harris Farm Markets. "Our aim is to offer a unique shopping experience, celebrating seasonality, sustainability, and quality under one roof."

"We look forward to welcoming everyone to experience the best of Harris Farm Markets," he said.

Harris Farm Markets is located at 7-9 Kenthurst Road, Round Corner, Dural 2158.



HARRISFARM.COM.AU

CASTLE HILL PLAYERS **Glorious!**

Based on the true story
of Florence Foster
Jenkins, the worst singer
in the world.

Written by Peter Quilter and directed by Meredith Jacobs, Castle Hill Players are presenting this hilarious and heart-warming comedy at the Pavilion Theatre, Castle Hill next month.

Set in 1940s New York, the singer everyone wants to see is the enthusiastic (and slightly delusional) soprano dubbed "the first lady of the sliding scale".

Glorious! follows Florence Jenkins (played by Kate Mannix) as she warbles her way from charity recitals and extravagant balls, to bizarre recording sessions at the Melotone Studios and finally her triumphant performance at Carnegie Hall. She is aided and abetted by a circle of devoted friends who are almost as eccentric as she is.

Join Florence and her friends for a delightful and blissfully funny play that generates a glow of warmth and lots of laughter.

Glorious! was nominated for a Laurence Olivier Award – Best New Comedy (2005) and inspired the 2016 movie Florence Foster Jenkins starring Meryl Streep and Hugh Grant.

Meredith Jacobs said: "Glorious! Is a rollicking good time at the theatre. Every character is colourful, the dialogue is witty and entertaining and the singing so bad you'll laugh so hard it hurts! A highly entertaining night out."

WHEN: 4th-26th April. Wed, Fri, Sat 8pm, Sun 4pm.

WHERE: Pavilion Theatre, Castle Hill Showground

Tickets \$30, Concession \$25

Bookings paviliontheatre.org.au/glorious or call 02 9634 2929

Enquiries call 02 9634 3846 or email admin@paviliontheatre.org.au

GLORIOUS!

*The true story of
Florence Foster Jenkins
the worst singer in the world*

By
Peter Quilter

Directed By
Meredith Jacobs

4 Apr - 26 Apr 2025

TICKETS \$30/\$25

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Five Hills Scouts Receive Prestigious Scouts Awards

BY LAWRENCE MACHADO

Five Scouts from The Hills are among the first King's Scouts in 73 years, following the renaming of the Queen's Scout Award in September 2024 (backdated to May).

The prestigious peak award for Venturer Scouts aged 14-17 was renamed after His Majesty King Charles III confirmed his patronage of the Scout Association of Australia.

Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of NSW and Chief Scout of NSW, presented awards to 21 King's Scouts, 11 Queen's Scouts, and four Baden-Powell Scout Awards (for Rover Scouts, aged 18-25) at the Government House in Sydney recently.

This included Scott Romanis of 2nd/3rd Pennant Hills Scout Group; Ryan Deng, 18, Glenwood, 1st Castle Hill Scout Group, KSA; Matilda Glanville, 18, Northmead, 2nd Baulkham Hills Scout Group, KSA; Khyati Lingerker, 18, Schofields, 2nd Baulkham Hills Scout Group, KSA; and Jack Miller, 18, Ebenezer, 1st Oakville Scout Group, KSA.

Scott or ScoRo as he is popularly known has been a busy reporter for Scouts NSW. "I got to interview Chandler Powell (Bindi Irwin's husband) at Australia Zoo as part of the recent Australian Jamboree in Maryborough, Queensland," he said. "He was a really cool guy to chat to beforehand. I was amazed because I've never interviewed someone who was media trained."

The goal of the King's Scout Award is to widen the interests and knowledge of Venturer Scouts by encouraging them to push their personal limits. It is the peak award for this age group, taking three to four years to complete, and a wider range of activities.

"For our Scouts, a peak award is representative of so much more than just earning a uniform badge and a special certificate – they are a reflection of countless hours of personal development and contributions to the community," Scouts NSW Deputy Chief Commissioner Niamh Hitchman said.

King's Scout Award recipients work to achieve personal development and contribute positively to their communities. Recipients qualify for additional Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) adjustment factor points via some universities.

"Balancing the work required to achieve these awards with the competing demands of everyday life – whether that be taking the HSC, starting apprenticeships, or maintaining fulltime working and family commitments – is an undertaking that cannot be understated," Ms Hitchman said. "My sincere congratulations to the recipients on their awards, and my thanks to those families, friends and Scouting members, who helped support them along the way."



Scott Romanis receiving his King's Award



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Client Testimonies



From day one when I purchased my home in 2006 I have had Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate looking after the property management and they have been absolutely fantastic and I have never had any issues. Recently we successfully sold the property by auction and achieved an outstanding price. I am very happy with my experience with Trevor Leslie and his Team and cannot recommended him and his services enough.

- JABEER CADER

The Team at Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate helped me immensely throughout the years. Great Team with exceptional customer service and assistance to help clients. Buying, selling or leasing they are the best.

- MOHSEN MOGHRI

Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate are definitely an agency that goes above and beyond. We have had the perfect experience as tenants in one of their rental properties for over four years. Trevor and his Team offer the good old fashioned client services that is hard to come by these days.

- SIREEN FREIWAT

Highly recommend Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate for their expertise in The Hills and surrounding areas. Living outside Sydney, we needed to sell our final two investment properties before retirement. The team handled everything seamlessly, with well-organized open homes and premium results—both properties sold within weeks. Trevor Leslie's integrity and dedication were a breath of fresh air. He negotiated outstanding prices and made the process effortless. If you're selling or leasing, we strongly recommend Trevor and his team!

- JOHN & ANNE RUMLEY

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The Hills Shire Council News

Clean Up Australia Day success!

Over 50 volunteers came together to remove litter from Crestwood Reserve in honour of Clean Up Australia Day.

Approximately seven bags of rubbish and several bulky items were collected such as metal and wooden signs, scooters, soccer balls, garden ornaments, traffic bollards, and cones.

The volunteers attended a special talk by Dr Michelle Ryan from Western Sydney University. She talked about the importance of keeping local waterways free from debris to protect the platypus and all the other creatures and insects that depend on these ecosystems.

In August 2023, Dr Ryan and her team from the Cattai Hills Environment Network (CHEN) made an exciting discovery—a platypus they affectionately named Bluey. This event marked the first capture and release of an egg-laying mammal in the area in 25 years.

Since this discovery, The Hills Shire Council has partnered with CHEN to offer a series of free workshops aimed at educating the community about the platypus.

The Clean Up event focused on removing rubbish from Toongabbie Creek and raised awareness about the importance of keeping all waterways clean, especially in critical areas where these animals may live or where water flows into regions inhabited by platypuses.

Crestwood Reserve is home to Toongabbie Creek, which serves as a vital water source for the critically endangered Sydney Turpentine-Ironbark Forest.



The reserve also provides habitat for native wildlife, including blue-tongue lizards, tawny frogmouths, rosellas, and bearded water dragons.

Additionally, the reserve features a creek-side walking track, multi-purpose sports fields, cricket nets, a dog park, a skate park, and an outdoor gym.

It is also home to the Hills Bulls Rugby League Club and the Baulkham Hills Cricket Club, supporting various sports such as rugby league, touch football, and OzTag.



Council Meetings

Tuesday, 11 March 2025 at 7pm

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

FREE Tai Chi Classes

Every Wednesday |
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Join our FREE Tai Chi class. Tai Chi is a gentle exercise that has many benefits for both the mind and body.

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Seniors are invited to a FREE jazz concert at 'The Pines'

Enjoy live jazz music while relaxing under the magnificent old pine trees at Jazz at The Pines, returning to the historic Roughley House on March 16 from 12:30pm to 3:30pm.

You can book a table or bring your own chairs and picnic. Take the opportunity to tour the historic building and savour fresh baked goods at the Visitor's Centre.

This event is FREE for Hills Shire residents aged 60 years and over, who will also receive a complimentary \$10 voucher to enjoy a homemade cake, morning tea, or coffee as part of The Hills Shire Council's Seniors Festival. Spots are limited.

Tickets can also be purchased on the day or booked online for all other ages. Ticket prices are as follows: Adults: \$25; Concession: \$20; Family: \$50.

To learn more, please scan the QR code.

Year One students can join FREE reading club

Foster a love for reading from an early age! If you know a child in Year One, the free Year One Reading Club is a fantastic opportunity for them to spark their imagination and develop a passion for reading.

This special club builds on the reading skills acquired in kindergarten.

Children who join will receive a logbook and can earn rewards along the way.

The Year One Reading Club is free to join at any Hills Shire Library branch and will run until October 31.

To enrol your child, simply visit any Hills Shire Library branch to sign up.

Scan the QR code to learn more.



Free Seniors Expo

Know someone who could use extra support at home?

Bring them along to the Seniors Festival Expo at Balcombe Heights Estate in Baulkham Hills on Thursday, March 13, from 10am to 3pm, and connect with experts who can help them live safely and independently in their own home.

Explore a wide range of services, including Meals on Wheels, Computer Pals, Seniors Rights Service, My Physio Services, and many more – all in one place!

Don't miss this chance to discover valuable resources that can make life easier for seniors and their caregivers.

Scan the QR code to learn more.



**Are you enjoying
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THE HILLS
Sydney's Garden Shire

THE BENEFITS OF WEARING YOUR HEARING AIDS ALL DAY

Enhancing Your Hearing with Ear Studio's Best Practices

At Ear Studio, we are committed to delivering the highest standard of audiological care through best-practice principles. Our approach ensures that every hearing aid fitting is optimised for comfort, clarity, and effectiveness. In this article, we will explore three key benefits of wearing your hearing aids all day and how best-practice audiology plays a crucial role.

1. Improving Communication

Hearing is at the heart of daily communication. Whether it's engaging in conversations with family and friends, interacting with shop assistants, or receiving important advice from healthcare professionals, clear hearing enhances every interaction. Our best-practice audiology ensures that your hearing aids are fine-tuned using real-ear measurements (REM) to provide the most accurate amplification for your specific hearing loss. This precise fitting process ensures that you hear speech clearly, even in challenging environments, making communication effortless and enjoyable.

2. Strengthening Connections with Loved Ones

Social connections are essential for emotional well-being, and hearing loss can create barriers to meaningful interactions. When conversations

become difficult, people may withdraw from social settings, leading to feelings of isolation, frustration, and sadness. With Ear Studio's best-practice approach, we personalise your hearing solutions to fit your lifestyle, ensuring you can engage fully in conversations and events. We take the time to verify that your devices provide the best possible clarity and comfort, empowering you to stay connected and engaged with the people who matter most.

3. Help Maintain Cognitive Functions

The connection between hearing loss and an increased risk of dementia has been well studied in recent years. While the risk of dementia may seem far away in the future for some of us, a more immediate factor is our daily cognitive load. With an untreated hearing loss, our brain has to work much harder and uses its resources to receive information. As a result, less cognitive resources for processing and understanding are available. Should the information you receive be complex or fast, such as rapid speech, even more resources are needed. If this becomes too hard most people become stressed; they may seem impatient as they cannot keep up, they may feel embarrassed to ask for repetition, and others simply switch off.

Why Wearing Your Hearing Aids All Day Matters

Hearing aids offer the most benefit when worn consistently. The brain needs regular exposure to sound to maintain auditory processing skills, and the longer hearing loss goes untreated, the harder it becomes to adjust. By wearing your hearing aids daily, you allow your brain to adapt to sound naturally, improving comprehension and maximising your overall outcome.

At Ear Studio, we believe in the transformative power of better hearing. As part of the **Hearing Up Network**, we voluntarily adhere to the highest global standards in audiology, ensuring you receive expert care and the best possible outcomes. If you or a loved one would like to experience the benefits of best-practice hearing care, we invite you to get in touch.

Contact our friendly team to schedule a Best Practice Hearing Evaluation on **(02) 9159 6122** or via email at reception@earstudio.com.au. We are open **Monday to Thursday from 9am to 5pm** and **Fridays from 9am to 4pm** and are located at **Lawton House in Castle Hill (suites 9-10 / 60 Cecil Ave)**.

We look forward to helping you hear better and live better!

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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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From Hawkesbury to Pittwater and back



Pittwater, like Hawkesbury, bounces on the back of its waterways, so when I was invited to attend the recent event held by North West Disability Services (NWDS) at Church Point, the surroundings relaxed me like most water captured locations do and I was keen to hear about a new project beginning at NWDS's Secret Garden, based at Western Sydney University Campus, Richmond, not far from my electorate office.

Hats off to Master of Ceremonies and Patron Dr Jim Taggart OAM for his ongoing commitment to this worthy

organisation and I know that Pittwater, like The Hills and Hawkesbury area, is familiar territory to him.

Jim was able to muster financial support with an art auction on the day which showcased the incredible talent of some of the NWDS participants. Staff also educated us on the Hydro Coop Farming Project which is being set up at the Secret Garden Western Sydney University Campus, Richmond. The venture is designed to foster independence by combining hydroponic and poultry farming into a hands-on learning environment and at the same time providing job creation and financial independence.

Currently, the Secret Garden community hub offers animal therapy, horse riding, training in woodworking, pottery, candle making and gardening, among other things. The hands-on learning approach empowers participants through

a sense of belonging, self-sufficiency and purpose.

What I like about this organisation is that they advocate for people with disabilities to promote equity and training through support required to develop valuable and transferable skills, and they have been doing that for 41 years!

Congratulations to the team at North West Disability Services for your vision, determination and talent. We look forward to the growth of the Hydro Coop yielding a bounty of supplies of free-range eggs and fresh vegetables and may your work be as sustainable as the produce you create.



Women's Health Matters

Getting healthcare based on your Medicare Card, not your credit card, is fundamental for Labor Governments. That's why we're boosting Medicare rebates and training more GPs.

For women and girls, there have been extra barriers to accessing appropriate healthcare. Whether through delayed diagnosis, the over or under prescribing of medication, or flat-out dismissal of their pain, women across Australia often suffer poorer health outcomes.

But now there's more than words to help women of all ages including with their contraceptive and menopause needs get cheaper and better healthcare.

From 1 March, it will be cheaper for women to access three popular menopausal therapies, and women will also be able to access new subsidised oral contraceptives on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. This is the first new listing for menopausal therapies in 20 years, and the first new oral contraceptive pills on the PBS in more than 30 years. Well overdue!

Women who use IUDs or birth control implants will also save up to \$400 in out-of-pocket costs with an increase in the Medicare rebates.

The specialist Rouse Hill Endometriosis and Pelvic Pain Clinic Women which I advocated for, will be expanded to help women dealing with difficult peri-menopause symptoms.

One in five Australian women will have menopausal symptoms severe enough to interfere with their daily life, which is why this package of additional support is long overdue.

And many more women will benefit from the \$100 million to support two national trials to make it cheaper and easier to get treatment for uncomplicated urinary tract infections and over-the-counter contraceptives.

I am so proud of these practical changes. Yes, they save women money. But they also elevate women's health issues, so we increase the likelihood that women and girls have better health.



Susan Templeman MP
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR MACQUARIE

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Authorised by Chris Stone, Liberal, Level 2, 131 Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

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/>



ROO is a real favourite at the Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter who are mystified about why she hasn't been adopted so far.

The much-loved long term resident recently celebrated one year at the animal shelter and is currently the longest term resident at the shelter.

Staff at Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter say Roo is a kind-hearted girl who is ready to find a loving family to help her blossom.

As she is not yet two years old, Roo has her whole life ahead of her, and would love a family to call her own.

Although Roo is still working on her basic obedience, staff say she's a quick learner—especially when treats are involved. They say Roo already sits for treats and walks well on the lead. With a little time and training, she'll be the perfect companion.

"When in the office with staff, Roo is placid, quiet and sleeps the day away. If you're looking for a loyal, loving, dog that can go on adventures with you, but is also happy to just

AT A GLANCE

NAME: ROO
BREED: American
Staffordshire Terrier
Cross Mixed
SEX: Female
AGE: 1 yr and 11 mos
PRICE: \$99



chill on the lounge, then Roo is your girl," they say.

While she can be selective with other dogs, she thrives in a calm and nurturing environment where she can receive the affection she truly deserves. With the right introductions and training, she may find canine companion she enjoys.

To meet Roo and find out more about her visit The Hawkesbury Companion Animal

Shelter (CAS) at 10 Mulgrave Rd, Mulgrave during open hours.

Roo's adoption fee is \$99 and includes microchipping, desexing, first vaccination and lifetime council registration.

Hawkesbury Council's Rehoming Organisation number is: R251000145.

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Did you know that dogs are considered seniors at 7 years old, while cats reach their senior years at 10? Aging pets may start showing signs of age-related health issues, affecting their behaviour, appetite, and mobility. It's crucial to recognize these signs early on, as prompt detection of age-related diseases is the key to managing them effectively and ensuring a high quality of life for your pet.

Some symptoms of aging may be obvious, like reduced stamina during walks, while others may be more subtle, such as changes in appetite or demeanor. Keeping an eye on your pet's eating and drinking habits, weight, toileting behaviour, and mobility is essential so that you can promptly report any changes to your veterinarian.

Common health problems affecting senior pets include osteoarthritis, obesity, metabolic diseases like diabetes or kidney failure, dental issues, and cardiovascular changes. Behavioural changes are also common, which could be indicative of cognitive dysfunction or underlying pain or metabolic issues.

Regular annual vet check-ups and six-monthly wellness blood tests are recommended for all senior pets to monitor their health effectively. These blood tests help veterinarians assess the function of internal organs such as the kidneys and liver and can often serve as the first indicator of any underlying health issues.

With early intervention, most age-related diseases can be managed effectively, ensuring that your senior pet remains comfortable, happy, and healthy for years to come. Give your furry friend the gift of proactive healthcare – schedule their wellness blood test today and receive a complimentary bag of Hill's food tailored to your Pet's senior needs.

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100 YEARS IN THE SKIES OVER RICHMOND

On 30 June 1925, almost 100 years ago, the Royal Australian Air Force established a base at what was then known as Ham Common. The flat land situated between Richmond and Windsor was a popular spot for horse racing (as evidenced by the establishment of Clarendon or Richmond racecourse) and for aviators such as William Hart, the flying dentist from Parramatta, who conducted flights from Ham Common in 1912. The NSW State Government sponsored the establishment of a flying school at the site in 1916 as part of the war effort during the First World War, graduates from the school would then join the Australian Flying Corps or be shipped to Britain to join the Royal Flying Corps. Both of these organisations eventually formed the basis of the Air Forces of either Australia or Britain.

William Hart was the winner of Australia's first air race from Botany to Parramatta in 1912 – a distance of 32 kilometres. He completed the distance in 23 minutes and won the race. He also opened an Aviation School in Penrith, taking on student aviators. On 30 June 1912, William Hart flew from Parramatta Park to Richmond. He had intended to fly the former mayor, Alderman Jago, who had become a firm supporter of Mr. Hart, to fulfill a longstanding promise, but the conditions looked dangerous, so he flew solo.

In August 1912, William Hart constructed a two-seat monoplane which he successfully tested at Wagga Wagga, but narrowly escaped death in it in a serious accident in Richmond on the 4 September of that year. He suffered

multiple fractures and a fractured skull and lapsed into a coma for three weeks. He was in rehabilitation in Windsor Hospital for two months and in recovery for nearly a year. This accident effectively ended his aviation career.

The Royal Australian Air Force was established in March 1921 at Point Cook, Melbourne after which it was deemed necessary to also establish a base near Sydney. Senior officers of the RAAF felt that it should not be located near the coast where it could be subjected to naval bombardment. At the time it was felt that aircraft in Australia were more likely to be used in a defensive manner rather than an offensive attack vehicle. The site at Ham Common between Richmond and Windsor was chosen as the location for the RAAF Base as it matched the requirements perfectly. It sat alongside the Windsor Road and Richmond Railway line which had suitable transport links to Sydney, and it had suitable aviation facilities from its previous use as a flying school during World War 1, leading to the establishment of RAAF Richmond some four years after the creation of the RAAF.

The Hawkesbury region continued to see a growing number of flights overhead as aviation grew in popularity during the 1920s, as many pioneer aviators took to the skies. Sir Charles Kingsford Smith, Amy Johnson and Jean Batten were among those who were seen high above Windsor and Richmond. A friend and reader of this magazine, Marilyn Stoneham loaned to me last year an album of photographs of Sir Charles

Kingsford Smith and Charles Ulm at, I believe to be, Richmond. This allowed me to copy many of the photos before she donated the album to the State Library of NSW.

On the 18th of July 1935, Smithy flew his faithful 'Old Bus', Southern Cross, for the last time from its base at Sydney's Mascot aerodrome (which would later become Kingsford Smith International Airport) to RAAF Richmond for storage. It was later moved to Eagle Farm Airport at Brisbane.

In a first for the Richmond base, an experiment was conducted in 1927 on the use of parachutes in Australia for the first time.

During May 1977, my family and I were evacuated from Auckland to Richmond on a Hercules Transport by the RAAF during an Air Traffic controller's strike. Unlike modern commercial planes of the time, the Hercules provided webbing seats along the sides of the plane, no windows, and was very noisy, requiring ear muffs. At the time, I was employed by the Australian Electoral Commission and a series of referendum questions were to be put to Australians while, at the same time, a National Song Poll was due to be held to consider a possible change to the National Anthem. As the Acting Divisional Returning Officer for the Division of Prospect, I was required to be flown home in order to conduct the election. The Hercules held many Australian citizens who had been stranded in New Zealand by the strike. At least they got home in time to vote.

Members at Alive

BY LEONIE DIXON

Alive 90.5 offers so many opportunities, events and camaraderie it's no wonder our membership continues to grow.

There are those looking to carve a media career and appreciate the training we have available, there are others who enjoy volunteering and meeting interesting people and we also have plenty of people who like to support a station they know is dedicated to the community. If you fall into any of those categories you should visit our website to see all the benefits you gain from being a member. The different categories of membership include:

- A \$36 membership entitles you to Website access, bi-monthly newsletter, 50% off

events, 50% off workshops, huge concessions on hiring the podcast studio, voting rights, volunteer committees as well as a welcome pack. You are also entitled to free training to become a presenter. There is also a free annual gift such as a t shirt, cap, pen, mouse pad or beanie.

- \$18 concession membership for students or pensioners has the same entitlements except for the free annual gift.
- Supporter membership at \$10 entitles you to our bi-monthly newsletter. You are welcome to attend meetings but not able to vote.

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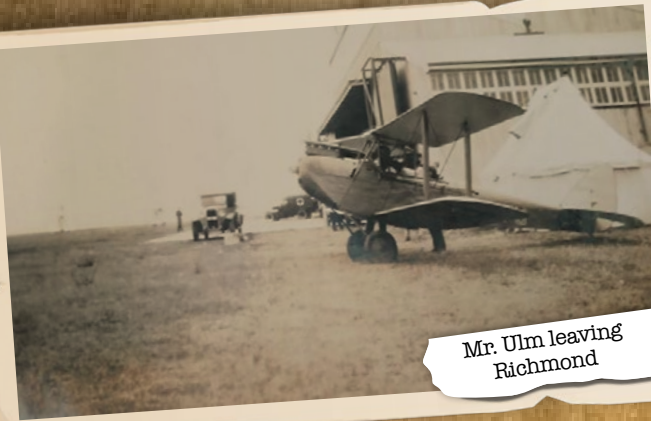
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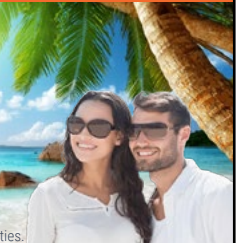
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Emerging Matildas to show their skills in Glenwood

BY LAWRENCE MACHADO

Watch some of Australia's elite young female footballers in action as they will descend on Valentine Sports Park, Glenwood for the 2025 Emerging Matildas Championships.

The exciting event is one of the major competitions being held in The Hills this year, featuring the country's most promising female talent in the Under 15's and Under 16's age groups. It will be held from July 15-20. Valentine Sports Park hosted the event known as the National Youth Championships.

Football Australia has decided to revamp the country's foremost Under 15 and 16 competitions, giving it a new identity and vision. Football NSW said the championships will set a new benchmark for elite youth development, further enhancing pathways for the country's brightest young talents.

The championship at the home of Football NSW will bring together teams from FA's nine State and Territory Member Federations, with the players vying for recognition in front of the national team technical staff and talent scouts.

Football Victoria will host the Emerging Socceroos Championship for boys under 15 and under 16 from July 6-11.

FNSW said it is an essential part of Football Australia's talent identification scheme and has paved the way for many Matildas and Socceroos over the years.

Players like Hayley Raso, Kye Rowles and Mackenzie Arnold (all from Football QLD), Jordan Bos, Kyra Cooney-Cross (Football Victoria), Emily van Egmond (Northern NSW Football), Charlotte Grant (Football SA), Ellie Carpenter, Caitlin Foord, Brylee Henry, Jessika Nash, Josh Nisbet (Football NSW), all progressed to international football through this tournament.

The 2025 Emerging Matildas Championships and 2025 Emerging Socceroos Championships will feature up to 58 teams showcasing the most talented youth footballers from across Australia.

"The Emerging Matildas Championships are a cornerstone of our elite pathways, where our brightest junior talent from across the country come together for a six-day event which develops, inspires and celebrates the next generation of national team players," Football Australia CEO James Johnson said.

"The success of the CommBank Matildas is built on the foundations laid at events like this, which are crucial in identifying and preparing the stars of tomorrow, while providing opportunities for aspiring coaches, match officials and technical staff to showcase their own wares."

What: The 2025 Emerging Matildas Championships at Valentine Sports Park, Glenwood from July 15 – 20.

Valentine Sports Park will host the Emerging Matildas Championships.



Australian and NSW star ELLIE CARPENTER was discovered through this championship. Picture: Facebook

Hills Grammar fields gives Eastwood an Edge for Shute Shield

BY LAWRENCE MACHADO

Eastwood Rugby, one of Sydney's most successful premier rugby clubs, are using training facilities at a Hills school for valuable pre-season training. They have been training at Hills Grammar, Kenthurst, since October last year in preparation for the season which kicks off on April 5.

According to Eastwood Rugby's GM Robert Frost, they have been making the most of the outstanding facilities at the Hills Grammar as they bid for the blue riband of NSW rugby, the Shute Shield.

The Woods are waiting for their new club to be built at the multi-purpose Fred Caterson Reserve, Castle Hill, with The Hills Shire Council working on the final details.

"Both the club's Shute Shield (first grade) squad and the Colts (under 20s) are using Hills Grammar's synthetic fields which enable the squad to train regardless of the weather," Frost said. "The players were very happy with being able to get in quality sessions regardless of weather conditions."

Frost said the Shute Shield includes two clubs with synthetic fields so their players are familiar with playing on this surface.

"But being able to regularly train on such a high quality surface could be the edge that coach Dave Telfer is looking for," Frost said. "The surface at the school is of excellent quality and for the majority of the club's players is much closer to home, so it's a win all round."



Eastwood train at Hills Grammar

"We are looking forward to the Sydney Premiership (18 rounds). The Woods have been Premiers six times in the past 25 years so there are high expectations all round."

The club recently won the highly-prestigious Kiama 7s, so all the omens are looking good for the season, he said.

Meanwhile, Frost is stepping down as GM of the club after 16 years in the high profile job.

In a tribute to his outstanding leadership and for steering them through financial woes, Eastwood Rugby said: "Rob has also been instrumental in developing the strategy for what is the necessary move from TG Millner to the North West."

"Rugby Australia, NSW Rugby and our peer Shute Shield Clubs have all recognised this strategy as crucial for the development of the game and have been very supportive of this move. The amount of time and effort Rob has put into developing and executing this strategy cannot be overstated. This strategy will set the club up for a long term successful future."



Eastwood Rugby training at the Hills Grammar grounds.

Hills Bulls U16 Girls Reign Supreme as NSW Oztag Champs

BY LAWRENCE MACHADO

The Hills Bulls Under 16 girls have cemented their reputation as the undisputed champions of Oztag in NSW for the second successive year.

The girls were outstanding in their title defence at Coffs Harbour last weekend, running in a staggering 80 tries in nine matches, while conceding a mere three. Their phenomenal performance, under astute coach Mick Withers, sets the bar for the championships.

"This back-to-back success at the state level follows their consecutive national championship victories, further solidifying their reputation as one of the strongest teams in the competition," Mick said.

Mick, who has played international rugby league, started coaching the Hills Oztag team from the Under-6 level when his daughter Temieke started playing. She is now a part of the champion side.

"A key factor in their continued success is the strong bond within the squad. The majority of the team has played together since they were nine, developing a deep understanding of each other's playing styles.

"Their chemistry and commitment to each other on and off the field have been instrumental in their achievements.

"Many of the players also represent the Bulls in rugby league and compete in numerous teams in the Lisa Fiola U 16 girls rugby league

competition, showcasing their versatility and dedication to high-level competition."

The Bulls saw off Nepean in an exciting quarter-final which stretched their defence before thumping Central Coast 5-0 in the semifinals. The champions were at their best in the final, seeing off Cronulla 5-1 to clinch back to back titles.

"Throughout the tournament, the team faced strong opposition, with the quarter-final match against Nepean being the most challenging contest," said Mick, who coaches the Paramatta Eels Women's Harvey Norman team.

"Despite this, they maintained their composure and lifted when it mattered most. Beyond that game, their dominance was evident, consistently executing high-quality Oztag that was pleasing to watch."

"The team's success is a testament to their hard work, discipline, and trust in each other. They are a privilege to coach, as they not only listen but also push each other to perform at their best.

"Their ability to back each other up in tough moments sets them apart, making them a formidable force in the competition. If the team is able to stick together next year, then three peat will be the goal."



CODE WORD

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

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

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

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SUDOKU

Rating: ★ ★ ★ ★ ☆

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

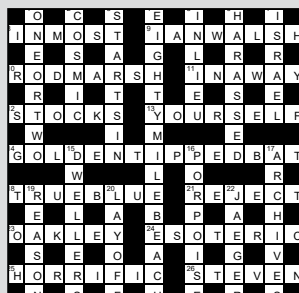
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2	3	6	8	5	7	1	4	9
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7	4	3	9	8	1	6	2	5
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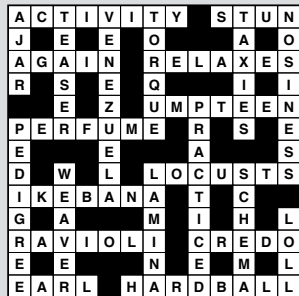
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Answers from last issue

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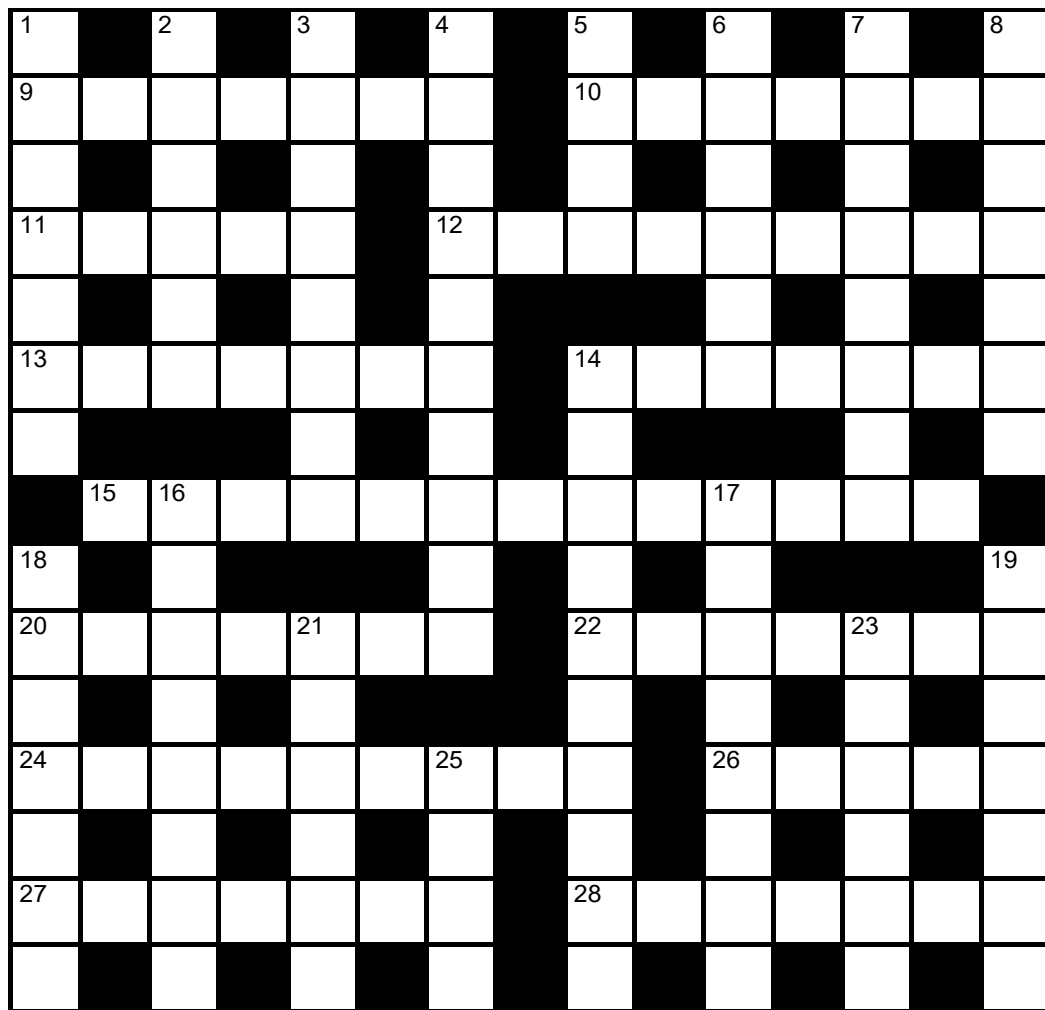
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Across

9. Fit
10. Small long-tailed bird
11. Claire Hooper, for example
12. Misnamed fruit bat
13. Utopian
14. Some arts
15. Sydney-born country singer
20. At the start
22. Flat-bottomed canal or harbour barge
24. Coiner of "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it"
26. Register
27. Mocked
28. Developed over time

Down

1. Clairvoyant
2. Consternation
3. Powerful
4. Enforce pit discipline to achieve improvement
5. 180-degree turn
6. Disposable mobile phone
7. Some wall art
8. Banished
14. Popular NSW National Park
16. Bombastic monologue
17. Enlisted
18. Mass-to-volume ratio
19. Musical introduction
21. Like fresh bread
23. Prosper
25. Chucks in

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