

Hills to Hawkesbury

Community News

4th – 18th April 2025 | Volume 42 – Issue 07

Local Stories, Local Events, Local People and Local Businesses

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COMES TO NORWEST

FULL DETAILS ON PAGE 7

FOLLOW YOUR DREAM!

BY CHRIS THOMAS

At the Dural Men's Shed we encourage the blokes to follow their dream and this can come in many different forms. Some have now learnt welding and others learnt how to turn some lovely lathe woodwork, or create great metalwork on the plasma cutter. One great dreamer is Colin Heald, and his dream from 72 years ago is to build from scratch a Hot-rod (Ford Roadster).

Colin's dream began in 1953, when as a teenager doing a Technical College course in the city, he would stop at the newsagent at Central Station and grab the Hot-rod magazines. He was so obsessed with the Hot-Rods that he decided one day he was going to build one (not bad for a 15-year-old!!) Now retired, and with the facilities of the shed available, he made



a start on the build in July last year. Working consistently each week, Colin reckons he still has eighteen months work to finish it. Many parts are not available now and so he has had to use his vast experience in the trade to build "hands on", so for example all the body panels will be hand built by Colin.

At the shed there is another member who is a Mustang fanatic and so he has supplied Colin with a Mustang engine for the Hot-Rod. Colin is shown proudly with his half-built Hot-Rod and the other photo shows what the finished product will look like.

The Dural Men's Shed has 150 members, and our main days of general operation are Thursday and Saturday from 9am till 2pm. There are particular activities on other days.

Mondays - there is a special woodturners day where the men can use one of our 12 lathes and there is an opportunity for trainees to be given guidance by some experienced woodturners.

On Wednesdays a group of 8 to 10 men from the local Warrah Home undertake basic timber work under the supervision of our men and each Friday during school terms we have 12 boys from Galston High School, who are taken through some trades, including welding, woodwork and electronics. This gives them a taste of what to expect in the



workforce and is under the guidance of about 12 of our experienced shed blokes. It is an intergenerational mentoring program which is enjoyed by both the men and boys and is highly regarded by the school and parents.

The shed is situated on the corner of Kenthurst Rd and Pellitt Lane as part of The Centre Complex. Contact email is duralmensshed@gmail.com or visit the website @ www.thecentredural.org.au/dural-mens-shed/



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 or click on the QR code.



FIGHT FOR A FAIRER HILLS FUTURE

BY BEV JORDAN

A major petition and campaign has just been launched by Hills Shire Council calling for the State Government to fund vital infrastructure upgrades before more apartments are built and thousands more people move into the area.

The Fight for a Fairer Hills Future campaign was launched by Hills Shire Mayor Dr Michelle Byrne last week in Kellyville alongside Old Windsor Road, which is struggling to cope with booming populations in The Hills Shire, Blacktown and Hawkesbury council areas.

The one square kilometre Kellyville-Bella Vista precinct has been rezoned by the State Government to allow more than 11,600 apartments housing more than 23,000 people.

Dr Byrne said: "According to the NSW Government's own housing targets, The Hills Shire is the fastest growing local government area in the state and our residents are fed up with the lack of funding for critical infrastructure like roads, schools and sporting fields.

"Windsor and Old Windsor Roads are already at a standstill during the morning and afternoon peaks and if you think it's bad now, you haven't seen anything yet."

A council staff member road-tested the commute from Gables to Norwest every day for five days during the morning peak. The average time taken for the 18km drive was 45 minutes

and the average speed never made it above 24 km/h.

"If it's like this now – imagine what it will be like in 2041 when the population of our Shire booms by another 71 per cent to 328,600 people," said Dr Byrne.

Jason Owen, President of the Sydney Hills Business Chamber lives in Pitt Town and says his journey to Norwest on weekdays can take anywhere from 45 minutes to 70 minutes depending on the time of day.

With 350 members, the Sydney Hills Business Chamber is one of the largest in NSW. "The overall majority of members complain about traffic, particularly along Windsor Rd and Old Windsor Rd," said Mr Owen.

"Of particular concern is how the impending construction of over 10,000 units in Bella Vista and Kellyville alone will further impact traffic across the LGA. This is compounded by the existing network of roads through Box Hill, The Gables and other surrounding areas where roads that were originally designed for rural or, at best, semi-rural loads of traffic now face an ever-increasing onslaught on residents making that trip.

"How do we as a community convince people to come to live here and to bring and grow their families if there is a considerable lack of resources for schools and rural-esk roads?"



He has already signed the petition which gained 1,000 signatures in 24 hours after the public launch.

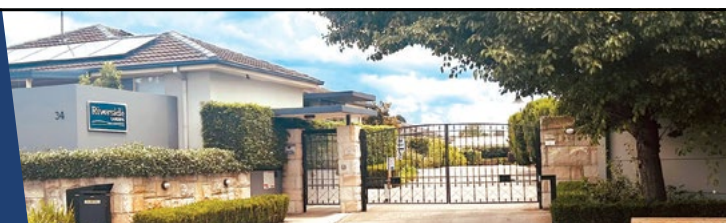
Dr Byrne said: "We're calling on residents and workers across North-West Sydney to sign our petition to the NSW Parliament demanding the upgrade of 45 roads including Windsor and Old Windsor Roads, and urgent funding for schools and sports fields."

The full list is online but also includes: 14 new schools. Funding for the development of 40 new sports fields (31 have partial funding and 9 have no funding) and funding to address a "\$207million infrastructure gap" in Box Hill.

The petition is at www.fairerhillsfuture.com.au. Once it reaches 20,000 signatures it will be debated in State Parliament.

State MP for Kellyville, Ray Williams has presented Council's petition to the NSW Parliament and urged the NSW Government to act, calling the situation "dire".

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BAULKHAM HILLS STABBING

A woman has been charged with three counts of wound with attempt to murder after an alleged domestic violence-related incident at Baulkham Hills.

Emergency services were called to a home on Jamieson Avenue about 5.20am on Monday, 31st March and found a 10-year-old boy, a 13-year-old girl, a 16-year-old girl and a 47-year-old woman suffering stab wounds.

They were treated at the scene by NSW Ambulance paramedics. The children were taken to The Children's Hospital at Westmead and the woman to Westmead Hospital.

The woman was charged with three counts of cause wounding/grievous bodily harm to person with intent to murder.

She was refused bail and appeared via a bedside hearing at Parramatta Local Court, Tuesday, 1st April.

METH POSITIVE

On Monday, 31 March, at around 11:50 PM, police officers from the Hawkesbury Highway Patrol observed a silver Volkswagen T-Cross driving at high speed on Hawkesbury Valley Way, Windsor.

Despite attempts to stop the vehicle, police allege the driver continued to evade them, reaching speeds of up to 170kph in a 70kph zone. The pursuit continued through multiple areas, including Windsor Road and Old Windsor Road. Police say the driver drove through several red lights and drove recklessly through roadworks.

The vehicle was eventually stopped with the assistance of PolAir and road spikes on Samantha Riley Drive, Kellyville.

The 29-year-old female driver, was arrested and allegedly tested positive for Methamphetamines. She was charged with Police Pursuit and other offences and will appear in Parramatta Local Court on 8th May.

Anyone with information about this incident is asked to call Crime Stoppers NSW on 1800 333 000.

JUICE WITH YOUTH

The Hawkesbury Police Area Command is inviting residents for the upcoming Youth Week to two events.

The first is a free juice and a chat from 3:30pm to 4:30pm on Thursday 10th April at Boost Juice, Richmond Marketplace.

The second event is a free ice-block and a morning of activities at Peel Park Richmond. Attendees should bring their skateboards, bikes, and helmets to Peel Park, North Richmond to test their slow speed bike skills in an obstacle course set up by the NSW Police Force Bike Unit. Everyone is welcome from 10am to 12pm on Tuesday 15th April.

CHARGED FOR MURDER

A 24-year-old Glenorie man has been charged with the murder of Johnny Birch whose body was discovered on a property at Glenorie.

Strike Force Halderen was established by The Hills Police Area Command and the State Crime Command's Homicide Squad, to investigate the circumstances surrounding the death of the 39-year-old whose body was found on a property on Gleness Place on Friday, 14th March.

Following inquiries, two men, aged 24 and 34, and a 35-year-old woman, were arrested at the scene and were taken to Castle Hill Police Station. Police say they were released pending further investigation.

At around 2.15pm on Sunday, 23rd March police arrested a 24-year-old man at a home on Meridan Avenue, Glenorie.

He was taken to Castle Hill Police Station where he was charged with murder. He was refused bail and appeared before Parramatta Local Court on 24th March. Inquiries under Strike Force Halderen continue.

VEHICLE CRASH

A P-Plate driver has been fined more than \$500 following a crash in North Kellyville. At approximately 9:30am on Wednesday, 2 April 2025, a white Toyota RAV4 travelling westbound along Wakefield Avenue in North Kellyville was involved in a crash, causing the vehicle to roll onto its side.

The P2 driver, and sole occupant of the vehicle was allegedly distracted, leading to a collision with a stationary parked vehicle resulting in minor superficial injuries.

Police issued a penalty notice to the driver for negligent driving, with a fine totalling \$544 and 3 demerit points.

TODDLER RECOVERING

The Mounties Care CareFlight Helicopter was tasked by NSW Ambulance after a piece of furniture fell on a toddler in Schofields at around 12pm on Wednesday, 19th March.

CareFlight's specialist doctor and NSW Ambulance paramedics treated the toddler for contusions following the incident before she was transported by road escorted by CareFlight's doctor to The Children's Hospital at Westmead in a stable condition

UNREGISTERED DIRT BIKE

On Monday, 17th March 2025, General Duties police attached to Hawkesbury Police Area Command stopped an unregistered dirt bike on March Street, Richmond. Checks revealed the dirt bike to be stolen from out of the area.

The 29-year-old male rider was disqualified from holding a licence and charged with a number of offences. The male was refused bail and will appear before Penrith Local Court.

VOLLIES HONOURED

The dedication and commitment of more than 30 NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) volunteers were recognised on 2 April 2025 at a celebration to honour their long service and efforts battling fires both locally and interstate.

Commissioner of the RFS joined the special guests and members for the presentation of 18 Long Service Medals, 11 National Medals and 5 Citations for Service.

Among those being honoured is David Stockman, of Galston Brigade and the Support Brigade, who is receiving the National Medal 3rd Clasp for 45 years' service.

"Joining the Galston Brigade in 1978, David is the perfect example of committed service to both the RFS and his local community, actively attending incidents over the decades and still, 28 years since commencing the role, tending to the upkeep of the brigade as Station Officer."

STRUCTURE FIRE

On Tuesday, 18 March, Fire & Rescue NSW and NSW RFS crews responded to reports of a Building Fire on Elara Boulevard at Melonba, near Marsden Park. Crews arrived to find the Newpark Sales Centre well alight, with fire burning through the roof of the building.

Firefighters in breathing apparatus initially entered the building and attempted to control the fire, before being forced out due to the roof becoming unstable and beginning to collapse.

Crews used Aerial Pumper 97 as well as ground monitors and hose streams to control the fire from outside the building, before committing breathing apparatus crews back inside to stop the fire spreading into the top floor.

Firefighters worked for over two hours to eventually bring the fire under control.

STOLEN TRAILBIKES

Trailbikes stolen from the Hawkesbury area have been recovered.

On Wednesday, 19 March 2025, Police from Mount Druitt Police Area Command and Operation Kella responded to reports that stolen trailbikes from the Hawkesbury were being ridden in Mount Druitt.

One male was arrested nearby at a service station whilst refueling a trail bike. The bike he was refueling was stolen the night prior from East Kurrajong. He was promptly charged. A second trailbike stolen during the same offence was located and seized from a nearby address.

The next day, with the assistance of Police from the Operational Support Group, Hawkesbury Proactive Crime Team and Mount Druitt PCT conducted a search of a residential property in Bidwell where three trailbikes were seized.

Two of these bikes have been linked to thefts from East Kurrajong and North Richmond in early March.

CELEBRATE YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE HILLS DURING YOUTH WEEK 2025

Young people in The Hills Shire can celebrate Youth Week 2025 with a FREE movie screening, art and technology workshops - all designed to empower, engage, and showcase their talents.

Running from April 12–17, this year's Youth Week theme highlights the strengths of young people aged 12 to 24, recognising their ability to lead, influence, and shape their communities.

Mayor of The Hills Shire Council, Dr Michelle Byrne, said this is a fantastic opportunity to recognise and celebrate the contributions of young people.

"I am proud that Council is supporting this state-wide initiative to empower young people and provide them with opportunities to express themselves, connect with their peers, and explore their creativity. Youth Week is our way of saying 'thank you' and celebrating the bright and talented young people who help make The Hills a wonderful place to live" the Mayor said.

There are free interactive workshops, from designing custom tote bags and a gaming workshop to skateboarding and creating terrariums. Also included is a FREE screening of **A Minecraft Movie**, complete with complimentary popcorn and a choc top ice cream. The fun continues with the Youth Week Family Fun Day before wrapping up with The Hills Fall Festival—a festival-style event raising

awareness of youth homelessness, hosted by Youth Rezolutions (Youth Rez) in partnership with Council.

YOUTH WEEK 2025 EVENTS

Strength in Style: Design Your Own Tote Bag Workshop

12 April (10am – 4pm, multiple sessions)

Powerhouse Museum, Castle Hill

Unleash your creativity and design a custom tote bag in this interactive, hands-on workshop. Registration is required.

Minecraft 'Build Your Future' Workshop

13 April (10am – 4pm, multiple sessions)

Powerhouse Museum, Castle Hill

Join fellow gamers and build your future in this immersive and collaborative digital environment. Registration is required.

Skate Workshop

14 April (1pm – 4pm, multiple sessions)

Balcombe Heights Skatepark, Baulkham Hills

Learn new tricks or sharpen your skills at this beginner-friendly skateboarding workshop. Registration is required.

Terrarium Workshop

15 April (10:30am – 12pm)

Henry Rooke Room, Vinegar Hill

Memorial Community Centre

Get creative and build your own miniature garden in this guided workshop. Registration is required.

Youth Week Family Fun Day

16 April (10am – 1pm)

Balcombe Heights Estate,

Turner Buildings Carpark

Enjoy a day of free family-friendly activities, a jumping castle, community stalls, and more. No registration required.

A Minecraft Movie Screening

16 April (2pm – 4:30pm)

Event Cinemas, Castle Towers

Kick back and enjoy a free screening of A Minecraft Movie with a complimentary choc top and popcorn. Registration is required.

The Hills Fall Festival

17 April (1pm – 5pm)

Aub Juleff Arena, Castle Hill Showground

Join us for an afternoon of live entertainment, free food, and fun activities - all while raising awareness of youth homelessness. Registration is required.

For more details and to register where required, visit www.thehills.nsw.gov.au and search 'Youth Week 2025'.

See more activities for Youth Week celebrated by Hills Community Aid (Page 19).

About HERITAGE VALLEY CAFE

With magnificent views of the surrounding countryside from the verandah, head to Heritage Valley Café on Old Northern Road in Wisemans Ferry for a slice of rustic charm. Step into a warm and inviting vibe of a stacked stone fireplace, recycled timber counter and floor along with vibrant green walls and potted greenery to discover a hidden café gem sure to become a favourite for brunching and lunching in style.

Best known for smashed avocado on sourdough with feta, poached egg, roasted cherry tomato, housemade dukkah and balsamic reduction, our Granola Bowl is a massive favourite too. Chow down on a breakfast burger of bacon, fried egg, potato rosti, tasty cheese, chilli jam and baby spinach on a milk bun, best enjoyed with a Mean Green smoothie. Later diners appease serious hunger pains with a Vietnamese roll with twice-cooked pork belly in sweet soy sauce, pickled carrots, cucumber, coriander, chilli, shallots and aioli, with a side of super crunchy fries.

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Seniors Gaining Confidence with Online Banking at Computer Pals for Seniors – The Hills

Online banking can open up a world of convenience for older Australians—yet many are unsure where to start. In 2028, everyone will need it. That's why Computer Pals for Seniors – The Hills is offering friendly, step-by-step sessions to help seniors learn the basics in a relaxed, supportive setting.

Participants will discover how to check balances, pay bills, transfer money, and stay safe online—all at their own pace. Member Keith Wood has created a dummy banking website for students to practice at their leisure. There's no pressure, no confusing jargon, and plenty of time for questions.

"Learning these skills isn't just practical—it gives people more independence and peace of mind," says trainer Ross Partridge.

Whether you're brand new to online banking or simply need a refresher, you'll find a welcoming space to learn with others who understand.

The next 'Internet Banking' session is coming up soon at our Castle Hill Showground venue.

To book your place or learn more, contact Computer Pals for Seniors – The Hills on 0429 137 131 or cpals.hills@gmail.com
Empowering seniors through digital skills—one step at a time.

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Our largest kids pub playground in Western Sydney is sure to entertain your kids while you sit back and relax.

Planning a special event just got easier with us, we now offer functions in our newly renovated function room, The Loft. Whether you're celebrating a milestone birthday, having a work function or getting together with friends, we would love to look after you. Bligh Park Hotel is where family, food & fun come together.



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Visy Dior Hotels International: A luxury brand for Norwest

Visy Dior Hotels International has announced a transformative \$7 million redevelopment of the former Rydges Norwest, launching its flagship luxury property in the rapidly growing Hills District. With operations continuing seamlessly during the revamp, the hotel officially rebranded under the Visy Dior Hotels International name on Thursday 3rd April.

This bold investment includes a **\$7 million investment in the first round over 18 months**. Key upgrades include an application for a **new ballroom, for up to 1,000 guests** - a long-awaited milestone for the local community seeking premium event space scale.

Giovannino Navarra, (Co-Owner with Tony Merhi of Visy Dior Hotels International), commented:

"We want guests to feel the luxury of our venue the moment they arrive – from the warmth of our staff and the elegance of the spaces to the beauty of our surroundings and the richness

of our dining experiences. This is not just a renovation; it's an emotional transformation. Our goal is to create more than a stay – we're crafting moments of connection, belonging, and effortless excellence."

Beyond the physical transformation, Giovaninno Navarra is also spearheading the **Visy Dior Phoenix Community Podcast** – a new platform designed to connect with local voices, tell compelling stories, and build stronger community ties. The podcast reflects Visy Dior's brand promise: **luxury shaped around people**, with authenticity at the core.

The revitalised hotel will feature:

- Elegant new guest rooms and suites blending modern comfort with timeless design
- Curated culinary concepts showcasing local and international flavours
- Refined venues for weddings, corporate functions, and grand celebrations

"Norwest is ready for a destination that blends world-class hospitality with real emotional connection," Navarra added. *"Through this property and our Phoenix podcast, we're investing not just in bricks and mortar, but in the stories, experiences, and relationships that make a community thrive."*

Visy Dior Hotels International is defining a new era in hospitality – **one that is people-first, culturally intelligent, and uncompromising in quality.**

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CASTLE HILL RSL SUB-BRANCH Secondary School Anzac Ambassador Program

Each year since the Centenary of Anzac in 2015 the sub-Branch of Castle Hill RSL has selected four Year Eleven students to serve as Anzac Ambassadors.

The selection process is competitive, with secondary school in The Hills LGA invited to nominate a Year Eleven student at the commencement of the school year.

Four of the nominated students are selected at interview to serve as Anzac Ambassadors.

The students study a topic determined by the sub-Branch and undertake training in public

speaking before drafting a speech that they present at the Dawn Service on Anzac Day.

The Ambassadors' speeches are always a highlight of the Dawn Service.

This year's Ambassadors are Ashlyn Kumar, Oakhill College, Isaac Browne, Castle Hill High School, Harry McMahon, Rouse Hill High School and Ella Dickson, Crestwood High School.

The Ambassadors have interviewed serving and veteran members of the RAAF and will speak about them at the Dawn Service.

Program Co-ordinator, Bryan Mullan, said, "I have had the pleasure of working with forty-six remarkable young people in this program. Many of them have gone on to successful careers in a range of occupations and in community service. This year's Ambassadors are no exception. They are exceptional young people who will represent the Castle Hill RSL sub-Branch in the best possible way".



2025 Hills ANZAC Ambassadors Ashlyn Kumar, Isaac Browne, Harry McMahon, and Ella Dickson.



Sub-Branch President, Cheryl Hill, said, "Castle Hill & District RSL sub-Branch members are extremely proud of their Ambassador program, which has been running for 10 years. Each year we have four exceptional students speak at our ANZAC Day service and this year is no exception. Thank you to the service men and woman who participated this year's program, along with the students' mentors, Bryan Mullan, Elizabeth Rodd and Georgia Titterton. The students' dedication to the program is second to none and keeps the program running from year to year.

Come and join us on Friday 25th April 2025 at Centenary of ANZAC Reserve, Wrights Road, Kellyville at 5.45am for a 6pm start."

There are Chocolate Eggs & Rabbits EVERYWHERE!!!

Calling kids of all ages.....visit every stallholder and explore all through the market site to find your reward for taking a great friends and family daytrip to historic St Albans – just 90 mins from Sydney, the Central Coast & the Blue Mountains, and a step back in time to a quieter, more gentle era.

If you are coming from Sydney, after breath-taking, magnificent views of the valley, you descend into Wisemans Ferry, turn LEFT past the Police Station for 200m and alight the WEBBS CREEK FERRY. It's 24/7 and it's free.

To get there firstly set your GPS to include Ferries - then once across the river, take a meandering drive beside the Macdonald River to the village of St Albans.

On your 21km drive to St Albans, you are surrounded by both farms and wilderness and it certainly gives you the feeling that nothing much has changed over the years; the sense of history and the natural beauty of the region makes St Albans an idyllic destination.

There's an awesome kids park opposite the market, plus our two fully licensed local institutions – the iconic convict built Settlers Arms Inn and the Pickled Wombat Café.



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SUNDAY ANZAC SERVICES April 13

Richmond RSL Sub-branch is inviting veterans, former service personnel and serving personnel not currently in the Richmond RSL Sub-branch to march on Sunday 13th April behind the Richmond RSL Sub-branch banner with branch members.

The annual ANZAC Sunday march which will take place along West Market, Windsor and East Market Streets to the Richmond War Memorial, Richmond Park, will start at 2.30pm on Sunday 13th April.

The procession will be headed by the Light Horse, veterans in jeeps and the Hawkesbury District Band, and will precede contingents from Richmond RSL Sub-branch, Windsor



RSL Sub-branch, the National Servicemen's Association, the Descendants of Veterans, RAAF Base Richmond, military cadets and community groups, including scouts, guides and local school children.

The ANZAC commemoration, to be conducted at the Richmond War Memorial from 3pm, will include the traditional Catafalque Party, keynote addresses and the laying of veteran and community wreaths.

Community members and families are encouraged to participate in the day by lining the streets of Richmond and supporting the procession, recognising those who served or are still serving our country.

Richmond RSL Sub Branch would also like to invite any Veteran/Ex-Serving Member or Current Serving Personnel to join; contact the Secretary, Gillian Fletcher, on 0438 782 419 if you would like to be included to give the sub-branch an idea of numbers.

Descendants of Veterans are also invited to join in the parade and wear their loved one's medals on right hand side.

COMMUNITY NEWS



DATE: Sunday 13th April 2025
WHERE: Richmond War Memorial
TIME: March commences from West Market Street at 2:30pm

Commemorative Service at Richmond War Memorial at approximately 3pm.

Members of the public who are a descendant of a former Veteran, of any conflict, are also invited to participate in the March wearing the medals of their Veteran, and/or carrying a photo or displaying the name of their Veteran.

GALSTON Sunday' April 13th

The annual Sunday ANZAC celebration at Galston will take place at the Galston Memorial Club from 2.30pm. Retired Naval Chaplain' Rev William Rosier OAM (Principal Chaplain RAN Rtd) will conduct the service. Key note speaker will be Julian Leeson MP. The service will be followed with a concert by the Hills District Pipe Band and an afternoon tea.

Living with joint pain?

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12th & 13th April

Saturday 9:30am - 5:00pm

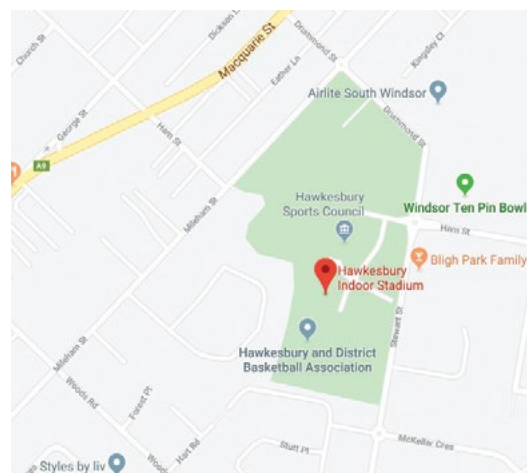
Sunday 9:30am - 4:00pm

**PCYC Hawkesbury Indoor Stadium
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out and about
with MICHELLE BYRNE

Kids With Cancer Foundation

The Kids with Cancer Foundation located in Castle Hill is a national charity that supports children with cancer and their families right across the country.

The aim of the foundation is to create a world where a child's cancer diagnosis is no longer a traumatic upheaval of their young lives and that of their family's but simply an unremarkable event in their life journey.

In 2024, the Kids with Cancer Foundation assisted 274 families and provided 955 financial assistance grants to families to assist with household bills and expenses such as utility bills, mortgage and rent payments, food and petrol vouchers, car expenses etc. These financial assistance grants ease the financial strain placed on families with a child who has been diagnosed with cancer and allows families to focus on their sick child rather than on household bills.

Beyond the financial assistance program, the Kids with Cancer Foundation funds 20 clinical positions and 4 support positions across 8 children's hospitals. To date Kids with Cancer has provided \$24 million for these positions providing children with cancer with the best facilities and

staff to make things a little easier. On top of this tin 2024, the Kids with Cancer Foundation committed almost \$1.5M for children's cancer research across 4 children's hospitals including researching genetic risk and brain cancer in children which is often lethal. These projects are potential game changers in the diagnosis and treatment of childhood cancers.

Recently I had the opportunity to visit the Kids With Cancer Foundation, to learn more about their programs as well as to assist packing Care Packs for children undergoing cancer treatment in hospital. These packs contain plenty of nutritious snacks as well as some fun activities to reduce the stress and beat the boredom of a hospital visit. Folding the boxes is a bit of a skill and ensuring the snacks and activities all fit is a challenge however, the most important part of the Care Pack is the handwritten encouraging message for the child receiving the Care Pack. It is incredible how powerful a few words written on the card can have on the child receiving the Care Pack and their family, knowing that someone is

thinking of them and cheering for them. These Care Packs truly do bring joy and moments of happiness in a difficult environment!

Last year, over 165 volunteers spent more than 60 hours packing close to 6000 Care Packs that were distributed to 7 hospitals across Australia. Volunteering to assist with assembly Care Packs is very rewarding and a lot of fun. It makes for a fantastic team building activity whether it be with a social group or work group whilst providing an opportunity to help some of our sickest kids in the country and to bring joy to them and their families. I look forward to assisting again with assembling Care Packs soon!

A huge thank you to the staff, volunteers, sponsors and supporters who make the work of the Kids with Cancer Foundation possible. All of us look forward to a cancer free future for our children.

To find out more about the Kids With Cancer Foundation including how you can get involved go to www.kidswithcancer.org.au



SCHOOL HOLIDAY FUN!

Join us on an Easter Hunt!

Saturday 12 April

Cost \$5 per ticket. Bookings essential.

*T&C's apply. Visit grovesquare.com.au for details.

Sushi Making Workshop

Thursday 17 April

Cost \$5 per ticket. Bookings essential.

*Bookings are essential with tickets strictly limited. Cost \$5 per ticket (non-refundable) and includes all ingredients and use of equipment. 45 minutes per session. Parents/carers do not require a ticket, however, must supervise their participating child(ren). The event is appropriate for children aged 4-12 years. T&C's apply. Visit grovesquare.com.au for details.



Free Easter Craft Workshop

Monday 14 & Tuesday 15 April

11am – 2pm daily, near Red Dollar

*Walk-in basis. Spots may be limited. Parental supervision required. Suitable for school aged children.

Meet the Easter Bunny

Saturday 19 April

From 11am, centre-wide

Visit grovesquare.com.au for details.



Free Petting Zoo

Monday 21 & Tuesday 22 April

10am – 1pm daily, near Red Dollar

*Walk in basis. Wait time may apply. Parental supervision required at all times. The animals are well-socialised, but interactions can be unpredictable. By participating, you accept the natural risk of engaging with animals.

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The Hills Shire Unites in Bold Push to End Domestic and Family Violence

Awareness of domestic and family violence (DFV) has grown significantly across Australian communities over the past decade.

From education campaigns to frontline support services, positive strides have been made - but true change requires more than awareness. It requires collective, community-driven action.

That belief is at the heart of a new initiative launched in The Hills Shire: the ZERO DFV pilot, developed in partnership with the social impact organisation Click Collab. This grassroots initiative aims to build a safer future by empowering local voices, setting shared goals, and taking coordinated steps toward eliminating DFV.

A key milestone in the project took place last week where community members, service providers, and local leaders came together to shape a bold vision for a DFV-free future. The session focused on reviewing insights from the community's earlier 'Click In' phase and identifying strategic priorities to guide action over the next 12 months. Importantly, the group also began laying the groundwork for a five-year

vision rooted in long-term, measurable impact.

"These sessions are an amazing start to something that is quite extraordinary," said Group Chief Operating Officer CHRG, Andy Abey. "There was an incredible energy from those in attendance, who desperately want to see change in their community."

The power of these early sessions lies in both their ambition and their simplicity. As Click Collab Co-Founder Kirrily Dear explained, "Through these sessions we have been able to recognise the enormous amount of opportunity. The challenge now is to distil this into very simple actions that the community can move forward with."

The next phase of the project invites registered participants - either in person or online - to work collaboratively over a structured four-hour session.

Zero DFV,
Together.



Led by a Click Collab facilitator, this workshop will:

- Define a five-year vision for achieving Zero DFV in The Hills Shire
- Establish 12-month goals to guide prevention efforts
- Review community insights
- Identify key priorities and methods for tracking progress

By uniting individuals, community groups, and local leaders, the Strategy Huddle ensures the region is working together toward a common purpose. And whilst this is just the beginning, the passion and momentum from the community is clear.

Want to be part of the change? Click in and register today at clickcollab.co

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Tickets on sale from 5pm and prizes drawn from 6.30pm!

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GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

www.lynwoodcc.com.au

CASTLE HILL RSL CLUB

SAT 5TH APRIL

Tickets on sale from 12.30pm and prizes drawn from 2pm!

CASTLE HILL
RSL CLUB

www.castlehillrsl.com.au

CLUB PARRAMATTA

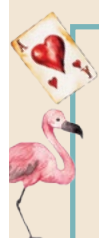
SUN 6TH APRIL

Tickets on sale from 12.30pm and prizes drawn from 2pm!

- CLUB -
PARRAMATTA

www.clubparramatta.com.au

Tickets are \$1 per number. Any purchase of \$20 will receive 20 numbers free!



DON'T LET NOISE STEAL YOUR HEARING: Prevention Starts Now!

On April 28th, we recognise World Day for Safety and Health at Work—a perfect time to talk about a serious occupational hazard: industrial deafness. Also known as noise-induced hearing loss, this condition affects workers exposed to high noise levels, especially those in industries like metalwork, construction, mining, and mechanics.

At Ear Studio, we see many cases of industrial deafness and are committed to raising awareness, promoting prevention, and supporting those affected.

What is Industrial Deafness?

Industrial deafness occurs due to prolonged exposure to loud noise, damaging the delicate structures of the inner ear. Unfortunately, once hearing is lost, it often cannot be restored. Common symptoms include:

- Difficulty hearing conversations
- Ringing in the ears (tinnitus)
- Increased sensitivity to loud sounds

How to Protect Your Hearing

Hearing loss is preventable. Here are some key steps to reduce your risk:

- 1. Reduce Noise Exposure:** Whenever possible, limit your time in noisy environments. If workplace noise is a concern, speak to your occupational health and safety officer.
- 2. Use Hearing Protection:** Wear high-quality earplugs, earmuffs, or both in loud settings like

construction sites, concerts, and motor racing events. Custom-fit hearing protection, available at Ear Studio, offers the best defence.

- 3. Limit Exposure Time:** Even household items like lawnmowers, drills, hair dryers, and headphones can be harmful. Be mindful of your exposure time and take regular breaks from noise.

Understanding Noise Levels

Sound is measured in decibels (dB), with higher levels indicating greater intensity. Even small increases in decibel levels significantly impact your ears. Here's what you need to know:

- **Safe levels:** Normal conversation (~60 dB) is unlikely to cause harm.
- **Workplace limits:** Prolonged exposure to 85 dB (e.g., a busy café, a food blender or a professional hair dryer) is considered safe within an 8-hour shift.
- **Danger zone:** Sounds above 140 dB (e.g., jet engines, explosions, jackhammers) can cause immediate, permanent hearing loss.
- **Doubling effect:** Every 3 dB increase doubles the sound intensity, meaning damage can occur in half the time.

Best Practice in Hearing Care

At Ear Studio, we follow Best Practice audiological principles to ensure every client receives the highest standard of care with our team of expert clinicians. This means:

- **Comprehensive hearing assessments** utilising state-of-the-art diagnostic tools to assess hearing function, identify changes, and provide a complete picture of auditory health.
- **Tailored hearing protection solutions** that suit individual lifestyles and workplace needs, ensuring optimal comfort and effectiveness.
- **Evidence-based treatment plans** that provide the best possible hearing outcomes, including advanced hearing aid technology when needed.
- **Ongoing support and education** to help clients manage their hearing health for the long term, ensuring they make informed decisions about their care, guided by Ear Studio's highly skilled clinicians.

What to Do If You Suspect Hearing Loss

If you're experiencing symptoms of industrial deafness, seek help as soon as possible. Early intervention is key to maintaining your hearing health.

At Ear Studio, we offer comprehensive hearing assessments and expert guidance on protecting and improving your hearing. Our commitment to excellence ensures you receive the very best care.

Take Action Today

On this World Day for Safety and Health at Work, let's prioritise hearing protection. If you have concerns about your hearing or need custom protection, contact our friendly team at Ear Studio on **02 9159 6122** or visit **www.earstudio.com.au** to book online.

Your hearing health matters—let's protect it together!

HEAR BETTER, LIVE BETTER

Book your Best Practice Hearing
Evaluation with Ear Studio today

02 9159 6122



4.9 star customer rating
(based on 290+ Google reviews)



We are located inside Lawton House
Suite 9-10 / 60 Cecil Ave, Castle Hill
(with under cover, off street parking)



reception@earstudio.com.au



www.earstudio.com.au

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FIGHT FOR A FAIRER HILLS FUTURE AND SECURE THE INFRASTRUCTURE WE NEED!

The Hills Shire Council has launched the **Fight for a Fairer Hills Future Campaign** – calling on the NSW and Australian Governments to fund critical infrastructure in our growing communities. We need urgent investment to get traffic flowing, to build adequate schools and sporting fields, and to build the basics in Box Hill like parks and drainage. Join the fight for a fairer Hills future. Sign the petition today at fairerhillsfuture.com.au and help us secure:

	ROADS	Major road upgrades are urgently needed, including widening Windsor Road and Old Windsor Road. 45 key intersections (including Old Windsor and Windsor Roads) require upgrades, along with improved bus, walking, and cycling connections to Metro stations.
	SCHOOLS	The Hills needs at least 14 new schools to meet growing demand.
	PARKS AND SPORTS FIELDS	By 2036, The Hills will need 40 sports fields to support our growing population. 31 fields are partially or fully funded by contributions plans, but nine across Cherrybrook, Castle Hill, Norwest, Bella Vista, Kellyville, Rouse Hill, and Baulkham Hills remain unfunded.
	BOX HILL – A COMMUNITY LEFT BEHIND	Box Hill alone faces a \$207 million shortfall for essential infrastructure. Projects at risk include upgrades to The Water Lane, Ross Place Bridge, Hereford Street Reserve, Killarney Chain of Ponds pedestrian bridge, and more.
	RETURN PLANNING POWERS TO THE COMMUNITY	Local decision-making should be in the hands of elected councillors who understand the needs of their community – not distant bureaucrats

We need 20,000 signatures to force a debate in the NSW Parliament and help secure the infrastructure the Hills deserves.

VISIT

Visit fairerhillsfuture.com.au or scan the QR code.



**FAIRER
HILLS FUTURE**



www.thehills.nsw.gov.au | 9843 0555

Youth Week

Council is proud to host a range of FREE activities and events during Youth Week to celebrate young people aged 12–24 in our community.

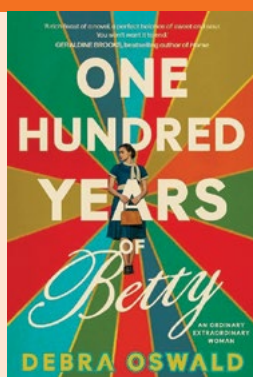
There will be a range of FREE hands-on workshops, a Family Fun Day organised by Hills Community Aid, and The Hills Fall Festival arranged by Youth Rezolutions.

For more information and to register, scan the QR code.



Make a night with your book club at the Debra Oswald author talk

Join award-winning author Debra Oswald as she talks about her brand-new book *One Hundred Years of Betty* – a story about a strong, intelligent woman navigating a century of world events and social upheavals. Debra is a two-time winner of the NSW Premier's Literary Award and an acclaimed playwright, screenwriter, and novelist.



Listen to her advice, tips, and stories during her author talk at Pioneer Theatre from 6:30pm to 7:30pm on Wednesday, 9 April.

Tickets are \$13.30 per person.

For more information and for tickets, scan the QR code.



Autumn School Holidays



If you're looking to keep your kids active and entertained these school holidays, get in fast to register them in Council's FREE Autumn School Holiday program.

The program is jam-packed with FREE events and activities including a futsal fun day, coding and gaming workshops, an insect hotel building session, and a nature discovery bushwalk.

For more information and to register, scan the QR code.



Council Meetings

Tuesday, 8 April 2025 at 7pm

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



**Are you enjoying
The Hills Shire Council News?**
Scan the QR code to let us know.



THE HILLS
Sydney's Garden Shire

Gifts in Wills help kids in the fight to beat cancer

When 12-year-old Cailey was diagnosed with a rare bone cancer, she was deep in the fight for her life.

In the space of just a few days, Cailey's cancer diagnosis turned life upside down, not just for her, but for her whole family.

"It was such a shock," her mum Gemma remembers. "She went from being a perfectly healthy child one day, to being in hospital fighting for her life a few days later."

The first sign that Cailey was sick came when she woke one morning in November 2021 feeling dizzy and unable to walk properly.

Her father Daniel took her to the GP, who recommended an MRI. They went to hospital the next day when there was no change in Cailey's condition, where a brain MRI was conducted with no issues found. Two days later she woke up completely paralysed from the waist down.

Cailey was taken by ambulance to Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick (SCH), where further tests discovered a tumour on her spine. She was then rushed in for emergency surgery to remove the tumour, after surgeons were concerned it looked malignant.

Cailey was diagnosed with Ewings sarcoma, a rare bone cancer that impacts around 75 Australian children under the age of 15 each

year. She soon began eight long months of treatment, which involved fortnightly rounds of chemotherapy and around 30 rounds of radiation.

"It was really intense for her," Gemma says. "She spent about two solid months in hospital initially, then had to go back for three to six days each fortnight."

Cailey's tumour had suppressed her spinal cord and left her with an injury so serious that her doctors were unsure whether she would walk again.

In July 2022, Cailey and her family received the wonderful news that her treatment had been successful. Her cancer was in remission, and it was time for her to go home. It wasn't, however, the end of her journey with SCH.

Cailey returned in October for an intensive, four-week rehab program to help build her strength, get her walking again and get her ready to go back to school. Gemma says she could not be more thankful to the team who helped Cailey win her fight with cancer and get back on her feet.

"They were amazing. I was so impressed with everyone from her oncologist to all the



nurses who cared for Cailey and of course Sky, her physiotherapist. She ended up becoming very close to all of them."

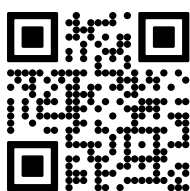
Leaving a gift in your Will to Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation can help change the future for sick kids like Cailey. As little as 5% of your estate can make all the difference to sick kids. Your generosity can support groundbreaking research, purchase life-saving equipment, and deliver the highest 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



Sydney
Children's
Hospitals
Foundation

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



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Don't leave your
legacy to chance.

www.schf.org.au | 1800 770 122



The Bromeliad Autumn Show

The Bromeliad Autumn Show will be held at the Federation Pavilion, Castle Hill Showground, Castle Hill on Saturday, 3rd May between 9am-4pm and Sunday 4th May between 10am-3pm.

Exquisite and rare Bromeliads from local, interstate and collectors will be on display and for sale to the public including Tillandsia experts Harold Kuan, Chris & Lap Larsen, BSA's competition winners Nina Woodcock, Elizabeth Mudriczki, Bill Homer, David Scott and Kerry McNicol together with Anna Ernst and her amazing artistic bromeliad wall hangings. Mark Belot with a variety of Giant and colourful Alcantareas and Angela & Gary Flemming.

Harold Kuan is a passionate Tillandsia enthusiast, an award-winning Bromeliad grower, and an internationally accredited Bromeliad judge. When he's not tending to his own plants, Harold volunteers his time at the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney, helping to care for and maintain their Tillandsia and Bromeliad collection.

His fascination with Tillandsia—often called “air plants”—began after he was captivated by their remarkable ability to grow without soil. Their unique nature, from attaching effortlessly to wood, to their graceful, sculptural form and silvery, furry leaves, set them apart as one of the most intriguing plants.

At the upcoming show, Harold will be bringing along a selection of Bromeliads and Tillandsia, offering both a chance to admire their beauty and with opportunity to purchase one for home.

20 plant sale tables are continually restocked, books, pots, information and free advice available from experienced growers.

There will be a display of the Bromeliad Show competition winners. There is plenty of parking on site, admission is free to the show and please bring a box for your purchases.

For further information call Ian Hook on mobile 0408 202 269 email: ianhook1@bigpond.com or check out the website <https://www.bromeliad.org.au>



VISION IMPAIRMENT GROUP

Meets on 1st Monday of month (Not public holidays).

St Andrew's Uniting Church Auditorium, 25 West Market Street, Richmond.
Contact Sharon Lamb 0419434776:slamb1950@gmail.com

Karen Potter 0457110004:karentpotter@gmail.com.au

ANZAC SERVICES AT GALSTON

Sunday 13th April Commemoration Service
at the Galston Memorial Club at 2:30PM
Please be seated by 2.15 to receive the marchers

Dawn Service on ANZAC Day, 25th April
at the Galston Cenotaph at 6 AM

Let us not forget those who gave their lives in time of war, that we might be free.

Contact Person: William Rosier OAM M: 0432 847 137 E: williamrosier79@gmail.com

COMMUNITY NEWS



HILLS COMMUNITY AID YOUTH WEEK ACTIVITIES

Don't be bored this school holiday! Celebrate Youth Week with a range of free and affordable activities at Hills Community Aid.

Join us for our Family Fun Day on the 16th of April from 10am-1pm with everything from jumping castles to gaming consoles, and some great competitions with prizes to be won! We also have a range of workshops on offer throughout the week for youth aged 12-18 including a two-day Phone Photography workshop, Youth Yoga, Youth Games - Creative Connections, and an online free Drawing Workshop.

For those keen to get a great job and save money to spend on something you love, we even have a fast track Barista Skills training program through Hills Daily Grind. Don't miss out! Find out more on our website by scanning our QR Code, search www.hca.org.au or call 9639 8620. See you there!



Hills Community Aid
Empowering Communities to Thrive



BILPIN ENVIRONMENT DAY

10TH OF MAY 2025

9:30 - 1:00PM

Celebrate Bilpin Environment Day at Bilpin Community Farmers Markets! Discover the Blue Mountains Shale Capped Forest, meet local environmental groups, and learn new skills. Bring your kids along!

Learn about weed management techniques



Get involved in your local Landcare groups



Wildlife encounters and children's activities



Every ticket enters the draw to win a prize!

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Safer communities by taking decisive action to tackle threats and unite our country.



Quality healthcare by addressing current shortages, and increase bulk billing and the number of Medicare-subsidised mental health sessions.

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0494 345 036



rattan.virk@nswliberal.org.au



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information



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

Susan Templeman MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR MACQUARIE

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Phone: (02) 4573 8222 **Email:** susan.templeman.mp@aph.gov.au

Mail: PO Box 855, Windsor NSW 2756 **OPEN:** Mon - Fri 9am-5pm

www.susantempleman.com.au

Authorised by Susan Templeman, ALP (NSW Branch), 299 George Street, Windsor NSW 2756



ADVERTISEMENT

Federal Budget – Delivering for the Hawkesbury

Funding for a new Hawkesbury Medicare Urgent Care Clinic and extra cost of living relief for every household was confirmed in the latest federal budget.

This continues our efforts to tackle cost of living pressures while at the same time investing in vital health services and ensuring that your Medicare card is the key to getting healthcare.

As well as the funding for our own Medicare Urgent Care Clinic – open extended hours, every day, for urgent but not life-threatening things – we're funding more bulk billing to help you see a GP for free, and even cheaper medicines.

Under Labor, the maximum co-payment for PBS scripts will be lowered from \$31.60 to \$25 – that's back to 2004 prices. It will save my communities \$1.2 million a year.

The Budget also tops up the tax cuts that began last July, reaching a combined average benefit of \$2589 per taxpayer in 2027-28. This is a permanent change to the tax system, not a one off.

And we extend energy bill relief with an additional \$150 for every household and small business, adding to the \$300 energy rebate that households, and \$325 energy rebate that small businesses received over the past year. We're making it easier for Australians to buy

a home with foreign buyers banned from this month from purchasing existing homes, for two years, plus an expansion of our Help to Buy scheme, while also training more construction workers.

There will be 100,000 free TAFE places each year and a 20 percent cut to student debt.

We know Australians have worked hard and made sacrifices, and my government is focused on delivering for households.

We're building on the strong foundations we have laid with lower inflation, rising wages and low unemployment helping to secure our nation's future at a time of global uncertainty.

Now is the time to keep building.

The federal election will be held on Saturday, 3 May 2025.

This election is a choice about who can better manage the economy and help Australians get ahead.

Please contact my office on 9899 7211 or email alex.hawke.mp@aph.gov.au if you require a postal vote application or how you can vote if overseas or interstate on election day.

The Coalition's Budget in Reply Speech has delivered major cost of living relief by committing to a 25-cent cut to the fuel excise for 12 months. If elected, this announcement will ensure that a household with two cars, filling up once a week, would save close to \$1500 in the following year.

Legislation enacting the excise cut would be introduced on the first sitting day of the next Federal Parliament, allowing the cut to come into effect as quickly as possible. It is time to

get Australia back on track. This relief would see a halving in the fuel excise, delivering real, visible savings to struggling Australian families and businesses.

Peter Dutton also outlined the mandate the Coalition seeks is to ensure we provide support to families in a cost of living crisis, fixing our energy system, providing for young Australians in terms of home ownership and ensuring we provide guarantees around health and education funding and essential services, and making sure we can provide security in a very uncertain world.

In the 2025-26 Budget, Lakeview Private Hospital will receive an MRI Licence effective

ANZAC Day 2025

For over a century, Australians have stood in defence of our nation, our freedoms, and our way of life. This ANZAC Day, I encourage you to attend a local service to honour their unwavering courage, sacrifice, and spirit. The Castle Hill and District RSL sub-Branch will live stream the Castle Hill ANZAC Day Dawn Service – If you are unable to attend in person, please visit <https://www.chrslsubbranch.org.au/2025anzacday> to participate in the service.

from 1 July 2025. I have strongly advocated for this essential service in our community, reducing wait times and the need to travel for critical diagnostic services saving both time and money.

I look forward to continuing to fight for our community and ensuring we have access to the best quality facilities in Mitchell.

As your Federal MP, I am here to help.

- ✓ Assisting with accessing Federal Government services
- ✓ Attending your local community event
- ✓ Arranging congratulatory messages
- ✓ Helping you resolve federal issues, including NDIS, NBN and Centrelink

Please contact my office if I can be of assistance.

ALEX HAWKE MP
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR MITCHELL



📍 Suite 8, 23 Terminus Street, Castle Hill NSW 2154 📞 9899 7211 ✉ alex.hawke.mp@aph.gov.au 🌐 www.alexhawke.au 📘 [AlexHawkeMPMitchell](https://www.facebook.com/AlexHawkeMPMitchell)

Authorised by Alex Hawke MP, Liberal Party of Australia, 8/23 Terminus Street, Castle Hill NSW 2154.

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: RINGO
BREED: Labrador
Cross American
Staffordshire Terrier
SEX: Male
AGE: 4 Yrs, 3 Mos
and 1 Wk
PRICE: \$49



MEET RINGO, a vibrant and happy bundle of energy! This spirited dog has a bright personality that lights up any room, always eager to spend time with you and explore new adventures.

Staff at the Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter say that while Ringo has a heart full of love, he's still in need of some training to refine his manners. He's eager to learn and bond with an owner who is ready to invest time and patience in teaching him the ropes. With love and guidance, Ringo is sure to become an obedient and well-mannered member of your household.

Hawkesbury Council's Rehoming Organisation Number: R251000145

MEET BELLA, a sweet and affectionate girl who's 9 years old and ready to find her new family. Staff at the Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter say With her laid-back personality, Bella is the ideal match for those who appreciate the calm and comforting presence of a mature dog.

Her chilled-out demeanour makes her a low-maintenance companion, perfect for individuals or families looking for a dog that enjoys quiet evenings and gentle company. Bella is affectionate and enjoys being around people, making her a wonderful snuggler for cozy nights in.

Bella is already desexed, so she's fully prepared to settle down comfortably into her new home. If you're searching for a gentle, loving, and tranquil addition to your household, Bella could be the heart-warming companion you're looking for. Adopt Bella and embrace the easy-going joy she brings into every moment!

Hawkesbury Council's Rehoming Organisation Number: R251000145.

AT A GLANCE

NAME: BELLA
BREED: American
Staffordshire Terrier
SEX: Female
AGE: 9 Yrs, 5 Mos
and 1 Wk
PRICE: \$49



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Is your Pet Slowing Down? It could be ARTHRITIS

As our pets age, their needs change – and just like us, they can develop health issues such as osteoarthritis. The trouble is, our pets are masters at hiding their pain. So how do you know if your furry friend is uncomfortable?

At Sydney Animal Hospitals, we're here to help you spot the signs early and improve your pet's quality of life.

What is Osteoarthritis?

Osteoarthritis is a painful condition where the cushioning cartilage between joints deteriorates, causing bones to rub together. It can result in inflammation, stiffness, and serious discomfort. Despite this, many pets hide their symptoms – especially cats.

Common causes include natural wear and tear, trauma (like a cruciate ligament injury), or abnormal joint growth.

Signs your pet may have Arthritis

In dogs, look out for:

- Limping or lagging behind on walks
- Hesitation to jump or climb stairs
- Aggression or sensitivity when touched
- Reluctance to exercise or go outside
- Toileting accidents

In cats, arthritis symptoms can be subtle:

- Less grooming, resulting in a messy coat
- Difficulty using the litter box
- Taking quick, short steps with the back legs
- Not jumping up onto furniture as before

How you can help at home

You can support your pet's mobility with a few simple changes:

- Provide low-impact exercise like swimming or slow walks
- Keep them warm in cold weather with coats or blankets
- Lower elevated pet beds or modify furniture access
- Cut a small access hole in litter boxes for easier entry
- Visit your vet for regular arthritis check-ups

Book your pet's arthritis check-up today

Available at all Sydney Animal Hospitals locations.

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Early Detection is Key

Many age-related illnesses are manageable – or even avoidable – if caught early. Regular check-ups with our experienced vets or nurses can help prevent long-term pain and give your pet the best possible quality of life in their senior years.





RICHMOND RSL SUB BRANCH
of the The Returned and Services League
of Australia (New South Wales Branch)

ANZAC SERVICES 2025

RICHMOND WAR MEMORIAL

ANZAC SUNDAY MARCH AND COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE

We would like to encourage members of the community and their families to attend this Commemoration and line the streets of Richmond to support the procession in recognition of those who served and those still serving for our country.

DATE: Sunday 13th April 2025
WHERE: Richmond War Memorial
TIME: March commences from West Market Street at 2:30pm
 Commemorative Service at Richmond War Memorial at approximately 3:00pm

Members of the public who are a descendant of a former Veteran, of any conflict, are also invited to participate in the March wearing the medals of their Veteran, and/or carrying a photo or displaying the name of their Veteran.

ANZAC DAWN SERVICE

The community is invited to join members of Richmond RSL Sub-branch in solemn observation of the Dawn Service at 4:45 for a 5am start at the Richmond War Memorial in Richmond Park.

DATE: Friday 25th April 2025
WHERE: Richmond War Memorial
TIME: 4:45am for a 5:00am start

For additional information about the ANZAC Day commemorations, marching as Descendants and the laying of wreaths, please contact the Richmond RSL Sub-branch Secretary, Gillian Fletcher on 0438782419 or the Publicity Officer, Lynette Bowles, on (02) 4578-2804.

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JOHN GRONO

SEALER AND SHIPBUILDER

By W. J. GOOLD

Captain Grono, in the "Governor Bligh," picked up a gang of sealers off Secretary Island, a little rocky island on the far south west coast of New Zealand. These men had been left there by the "Active," three years previously, and had existed upon seal meat and the roots of ferns. Many of these little islands off the coast of New Zealand had been known and worked by the sealers long before they were "officially" discovered. Grono himself is credited with having named the Foveaux Straits during his voyages in the "Governor Bligh," and many of the islands bear names bestowed on them by the sealers. On March 11th, 1809, Captain Grono brought the "Governor Bligh" into Port Jackson with 10,000 seal skins aboard, he was followed three days later by Captain Ebor Bunker, in the "Pegasus," with 12,600 skins. Prices were then at their peak, and skins were fetching 30/- each in London, so it can readily be understood what fortunes were being made in the sealing industry. In three voyages between 1813 and 1819, the "Governor Bligh" brought in over 34,000 skins—and as the skipper and crew received a percentage of the catch, Captain Grono soon had sufficient capital to launch out on his own account. In April, 1821, he received a grant of land on the banks of the Hawkesbury River, near Windsor, and here he commenced shipbuilding in partnership with

Barnett Levey (of the old Royal Hotel, George St Sydney) and James Cooper—the firm being known as Cooper, Levey & Grono. On 21 December 1821, the brig, "Elizabeth" (130 tons), was launched at Windsor with great ceremony, most of the elite of Sydney and Parramatta being present. Captain Grono took command of his new ship and left upon a sealing voyage which occupied nearly two years, returning on October 23rd, 1823. On her next voyage the "Elizabeth" was placed in the command of Captain Books (who had married one of Grono's daughters); John Grono remaining ashore to supervise the shipbuilding. The "Industry" was the next vessel built by Grono, and she was also placed in charge of a son-in-law of Captain Grono—William Wiseman, son of Solomon Wiseman, of "Wiseman's Ferry." He had married Miss Matilda Grono on June 22nd, 1827, and it was the first wedding at the old Ebenezer Church, at Portland Head. The "Industry" was wrecked off Stewart Island on February 28th, 1831, Captain Wiseman and ten seamen being lost. The next vessel turned out from Grono's shipbuilding yards was the "Australian," launched on March 21st, 1829. She was 270 tons register, being 100 tons larger than any other vessel built in the Colony up to that date. It is interesting to note that the whole of the timber used in her construction was grown

JOHN GRONO OF THE HAWKESBURY (Part 2)

In this issue of the Memories Column in the Hills to Hawkesbury Community News I have decided to republish an article written by W.J. Goold that appeared in the March 10 1932 issue of "The Voice of the North" newspaper. Due to the length of the article I have decided to print over two issues This is part two.

in the Hawkesbury River district, blue gum, black butted gum, iron bark, and appletree. Her planks were secured from what is now the McDonald River; they were cut and carved on the spot, and as they could not be hauled by land, they were dragged by manual labour down the creek to the Hawkesbury River. The iron work on the ship was made in Windsor, and the whole of her ropes and cordage were made from New Zealand flax. It took two years to complete the construction of this vessel, mainly owing to difficulty in securing good carpenters. The launching of the largest vessel in the Colony was a great event, and the old "Sydney Gazette" records that an immense concourse gathered at the stocks to see her take the water. "The Governor Bourke," launched in 1833, was the seventh large ship built by John Grono at the Hawkesbury River, but he turned out a large number of smaller craft for the river trade.

The old Captain died on May 4th, 1847, and is buried in the little cemetery at Portland Head, in company with many other old pioneers of the Hawkesbury. In his long span of 84 years he saw many changes take place in the Colony, particularly in the shipping trade. And what wonderful tales of adventure on the sea could the old Captain tell.

ALIVE WITH ROCK'N'ROLL

BY KERIMA-GAE TOPP

We have several Rock'n'Roll shows at Alive but one of the most enduring is Juke Box Jive, which Kerima-Gae describes in her own words.

My mum and dad (Norma & Aub Topp) were foundation members, in 1992, of what was then known as 2CCR (Cumberland Community Radio). Two years later I got the opportunity of being a co-host on Rock 'n' Roll show Juke Box Jive. With the host suddenly leaving I decided to continue on even though I only had about 10 CDs at that time to play. Over 30 years later, now with over 25,000 Rock 'n' Roll songs from the 50s, 60s & 70s in my library, I am still excited about going to air every Friday night from 9am till midnight, as my show is a request show

where listeners can phone in, send an SMS, etc to request a song. For many years my late Mum helped answer request calls, now my partner John Brock fulfils that role. With more modern technology these days I have a number of listeners from overseas, who with podcasting, can listen when it suits them rather than having to get up at 5am etc for a direct broadcast. I certainly have some dedicated listeners as many of my current listeners have been with me since Day 1 as they enjoy the rock 'n' roll nostalgia.



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AREA DURING PAST DECADES.



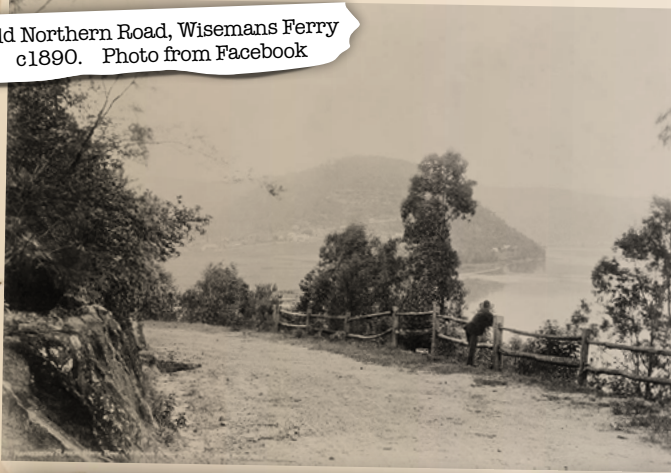
Ebenezer Tree.
Photo from Facebook

Old Northern Rd. Wisemans Ferry c1890.
Photo from Facebook



Reproduced from the original Tinsell Collection glass plate. © ACP 1981

Old Northern Road, Wisemans Ferry
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Scene from Laughtondale c1890.
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HOWE, JOHN and FRANCES WARD
JACKLIN, WILLIAM and MARY CARDELL (deceased)
and ELIZABETH CONNELL
JOHNSTON, ANDREW and MARY BEARD
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MEIN, JAMES and SUSANNAH SKENE
STUBBS, WILLIAM and SARAH WINGATE
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Plaque at Ebenezer Church.
Photo from Facebook

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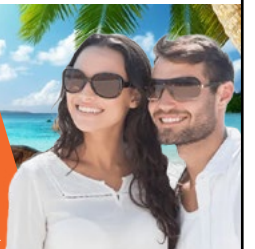
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Local trio chase Asian Cup glory with the Joeys

BY LAWRENCE MACHADO

Nickolas Alfaro, Kade Baccus and Thomas Cutuk, the highly-regarded footballers with connections to The Hills and Hawkesbury, will represent Australia at the 2025 AFC U17 Asian Cup in Saudi Arabia.

Australia has been drawn into Group B and will face Vietnam (April 4), United Arab Emirates (April 7) and Japan (April 10), with the top eight teams in the competition qualifying for the FIFA U-17 World Cup being hosted by Qatar in November 2025.

Defender Thomas Cutuk, is a Year 11 student at Marian Catholic College, Kenthurst. He started his career with Hills Spirit FC before being signed up by premier A-League side Sydney Wanderers.

Midfielder Kade Baccus, who spent his early days at Parklea FC, is now a teammate of Cutuk at the Wanderers. In the 2019 Under-12 grand final, Kade won the Man of the Match Award and has continued to excel at higher levels.

Kade's South African-born brothers, Kearyn and Keanu, are also professional footballers, with the latter a regular with the Socceroos.

Originally from Schofields, Alfaro was recruited from Football Tech Academy in Blackett after showing early promise as a talented midfielder.

Alfaro played for Nepean FC before being signed up by A-League powerhouse Sydney FC in January. He signed his first professional contact with multiple A-League champions Sydney FC early this year.

"Being selected to represent Australia at a major tournament is something that I am very grateful for and looking forward to as we've been working for this tournament for the last 12 months" Alfaro said.

"Being able to contribute to the team to get to this stage is something me and my family are proud of and can't wait to showcase what myself and my teammates can do."

The three-year deal with Sydney FC marks a significant milestone for Alfaro, who joined Sydney FC's Academy, aged 11, under the guidance of technical director Kelly Cross.

"Nico has always possessed a special quality on the pitch," says Cross. "With a Peruvian family background, he carries a touch of South American football in his game – something that stands out the moment you watch him play. He is incredibly comfortable on the ball and prefers to take risks and create opportunities rather than simply making a safe pass."

"Nico is a player who makes things happen. One of his standout attributes is his ability to draw opponents in, allowing them to think they can win the ball, only to glide past them effortlessly. This skill is what sets special players apart."

The Joeys recently won the recent Hattrick U17 International Tournament and the ASEAN U16 Boys Championship in addition to impressive tours of Europe and the Pacific.

Subway Joeys' coach Brad Maloney said he is pleased with his team's application and effort in implementing their playing style and off-field standards.

Thomas Cutuk is a Marian College student playing for WS Wanderers. Photo: Marian College Facebook

Kade Baccus started his football career at Parklea FC. Photo: Courtesy WS Wanderers

Former Schofields local Nickolas Alfaro. Photo: Football Australia

Hills AFL clubs benefit from elite coaching

BY LAWRENCE MACHADO

Coaches from The Hills District gained invaluable tips from a coaching workshop held by senior GWS Giants coaches, including head coach Adam Kingsley.

Representatives from East Coast Eagles, Pennant Hills, Parramatta Goannas, Kellyville-Rouse Hill Magpies, Baulkham Hills and Castle Hill Sports High School were among 30 coaches from across Sydney who learnt new skills to pass on to their teams, ranging from Auskick to Sydney Premier Division level.

The local coaches included Adrian Cordi (Hills Sports High School), Daniel Elson (Kellyville), Chad Fleay (Hills Eagles/Baulkham Hills), Jonna Kaars (Pennant Hills Demons), Kyle Mahoney (Pennant Hills), Max Pobihuszka, Shane Sweep, and Max Roberts (Kellyville Rouse Hill Magpies), Trend Sandercoe (Baulkham Hills), Michael Thompson (East Coast Eagles), Steven Toohey (Westbrook Junior AFL Club, Cherrybrook), and Luke Van Staveren (Baulkham Hills Junior AFL Club).

The local coaches were able to pick the collecting coaching brains of GWS Senior coaching staff, including Kingsley, assistant coaches Jeremy Laidler, Ben Hart and Craig Jennings.

Kingsley said they were happy to share ideas and learn from each other. "This has been a great opportunity to work hand in hand with community football clubs across Greater Sydney," he said.

"Footy around here is tight-knit so to be able to share ideas and learn from each other makes us all stronger and richer. We're eager to continue deepening our connection with community clubs."



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Hills Bulls Plan A Long Lasting Legacy

BY LAWRENCE MACHADO

"We want to ensure that we're helping up-skill coaches who are at the forefront of the game and are ambassadors for it on the ground, especially here in Western Sydney."

During the busy coaching session held at the GWS headquarters, they learnt about structure training, developing club culture, talent, and development pathways.

The event was a joint effort between the Giants and AFL NSW/ACT Coaching and Education Lead Ryan O'Keefe.

There are seven AFL clubs in The Hills District across junior, senior and masters footy plus four school Auskick programs.

Meanwhile, Giants' players Harvey Thomas (AFL), Madison Brazendale, Zarlie Goldsworthy, Brodee Mowbray and Tarni Evans presented the first crop of Hills Phoenix JAFC with their guernseys ahead of the 2025 AFL Sydney Season.

Hills Phoenix is a girls-only alliance between Baulkham Hills Hawks and Kellyville-Rouse Hill Magpies. The Hawks and the Magpies have had a huge growth in registration.

The Hills Bulls, one of the most successful rugby league clubs in The Hills District, is launching Our Club, Our Legacy campaign, to raise \$350,000 for their new clubhouse in Baulkham Hills.

The official launch is on Sunday, April 13, at their Crestwood Oval headquarters, at 2pm.

The club expansion includes a level 1 clubhouse and a multi-purpose function room which will be a valued asset for the Bulls for many years to come. The Bulls have already completed Stage 1, incorporating a new canteen and suspended slab over the existing facilities in preparation for the new clubhouse. The completed gym has been named in honour of club stalwart and sponsor, Paul 'Griffo' Griffin, who died tragically last November.

Club president Michael Gremmo said they are reaching out to current and past members to make this a very successful campaign.

"We are very proud of what our club has achieved over the past 62 years and we want to leave a lasting legacy for the future generations who will patronise our wonderful club," Gremmo said.

Since the club was mooted over a few beers at the iconic Bull & Bush Hotel in Baulkham Hills in 1963, the Hills Bulls have gone from strength to strength, having had their first season in 1964.

Fast forward to 2025, and the club boasts more than 7000 players, officials and parents, providing them with a phenomenally-strong foundation to grow the game further in the Hills. The club is a formidable force in the Ron Massey and Sydney Shield competitions, with visitors dreading to confront the Bulls, specially at home.

There are 43 boys and girls teams, six girls league tag teams, 660 junior and senior players, with a remarkable 4500 players involved in Oztag, where the Bulls are setting the bar in different age groups in national and state competitions.

Gremmo said this is the perfect opportunity for all past and current members to be a part of the club's next significant milestone and create a legacy for years to come.

"Our challenge is to raise \$350,000 to help complete the clubhouse, which is part of the \$850,000 required," he said.

The rest of the financing will come via government grants and other revenue streams. Gremmo said members can contribute through donations, competitions, raffles, and other fundraising activities.

Details: The official launch and the opening of Griffo's Gym at 2pm on Sunday, April 13, at the Crestwood Oval.

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C	B	I	G	E	Y	E	H	S	I	F	K	N	O	M
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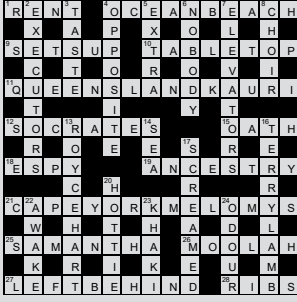
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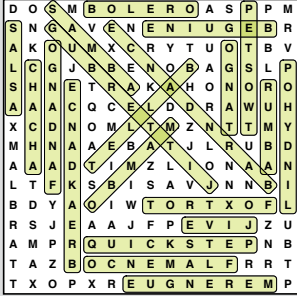
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Answers from last issue

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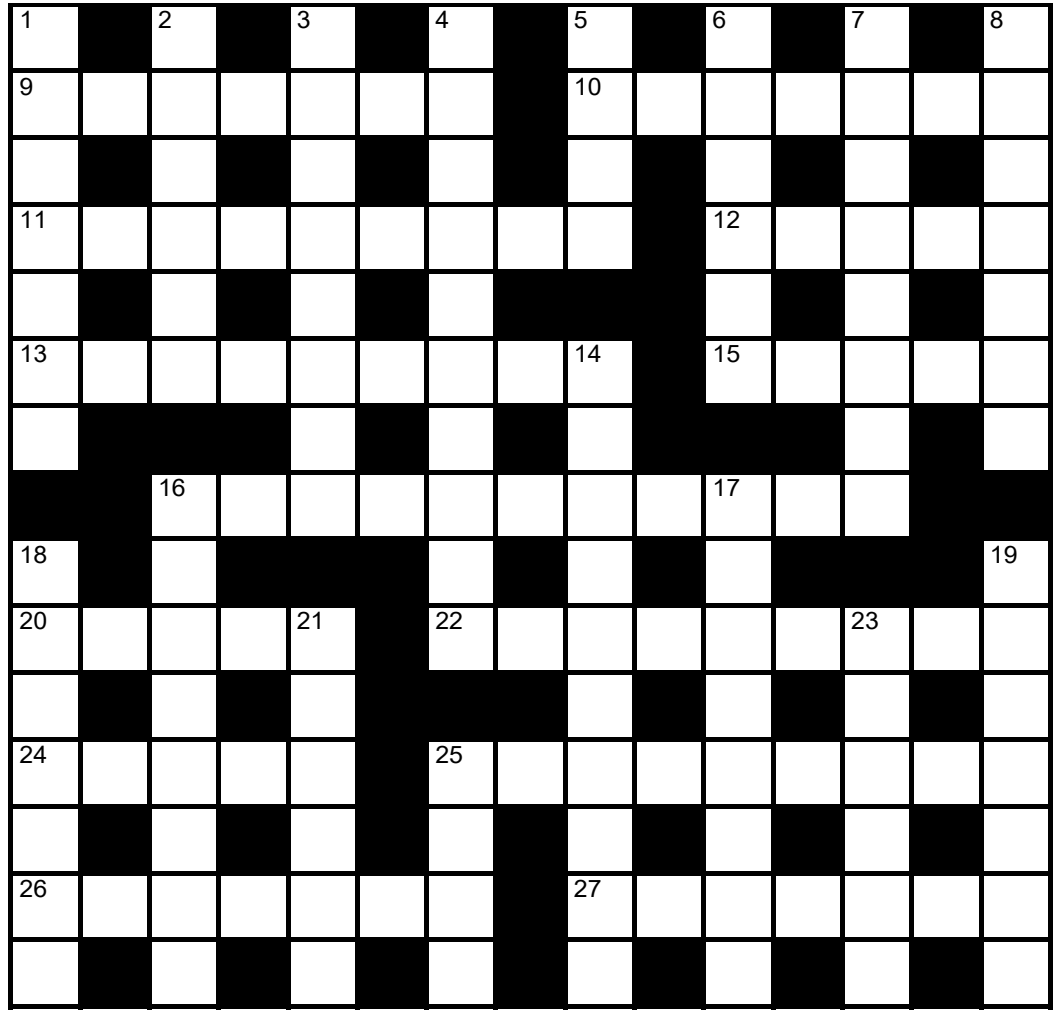
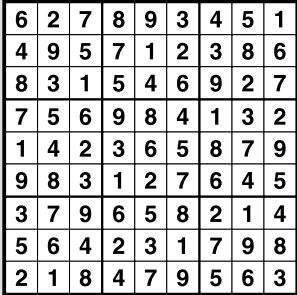
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Across

9. Fully owned
10. Musical entertainment
11. Carried on
12. Elevate
13. Hero type
15. Storage centre
16. Controversial WA settlement between Lancelin and Cervantes
20. Person used as one's excuse
22. Institution for abandoned children
24. Prague resident
25. Asian ---, a shorebird seen in summer in the North
26. Energetic
27. Bigger than the rest

Down

1. Discriminating diner
2. --- Murphy, radical judge
3. Swore
4. Nuclear point of detonation
5. Cricket World Cupper --- Hogg
6. Beat the goalie
7. Bare
8. Canadian oil province
14. Olympic gold-winning Hockeyroo forward
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23. Former tennis Grand Slammer --- John Cooper
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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.

[illegible]

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

Rating: ★ ★ ★ ★ ☆

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

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