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Our Sales Office will be closed over the festive season, returning Monday 6 January, 2025.



Two things to know: 1. You will have to pay a departure fee when you leave this village. 2. You will have to share any capital gains received with the operator of this village.

Compulsory Northern Beaches Council Fire Audit

All property owners in the Northern Beaches local government area should be aware of the implications of receiving a notice of compulsory fire audit, a so-called “Development Control Order” (DCO) from the Northern Beaches Council (the Council).

In our case, the property concerned is a ~90-year-old apartment block of between 20 And 30 units in Manly.

Until 2018, residential buildings constructed prior to 1988 were exempt from such DCOs. Upon realising that that exemption was no longer in place, in 2020 our Owners’ Committee commissioned a fire upgrade report (the Report) from an external consultant. The purpose of the Report was for internal consideration by the owners (only), to determine the status of the building’s fire-readiness compared to modern standards.

The Report listed various items that the consultant believed would be considered non-compliant with current fire safety standards. These items included, but were not limited to:

- Metal mesh screens on all ground floor windows;
- The replacement of all doors in the block with fire doors;
- The removal of all security screen doors;
- The raising of all internal stairwell handrails.

Many of the supposed remedial works are spurious, impractical and/or simply unnecessary. The building is predominantly constructed from masonry and has minimal flammable materials (unlike many modern constructions).

Managing a project of the scale and extent of the DCO is beyond the part-time capacity of Committee members. A Project Manager has been engaged to manage this complex matter. This is an expensive (but unfortunately necessary) course of action for Owners’

The Owners have to date spent over \$100,000 simply having preparatory plans (architects, fire engineers etc) for “alternative solutions” to those recommended in the Report. The Report needs to be approved, first by a certifier, and then the NBC. So far, this expenditure has not resulted in a single item actually being rectified.

The Report was provided to the Council without the other owners’ consent around 2022, by a former owner-occupier who subsequently sold their unit and moved away. The NBC, without visiting the site or any consultation with any owners, simply adopted the Report as being the basis for the DCO. The DCO was then issued, making compulsory every item noted in the Report. The Report estimated that the total cost of the works to be carried out would be between \$300,00-\$350,000 over 5 years. It transpires the consultant was qualified to compile the report, but not qualified to estimate the total costs.

At no time has a “reasonably practical” lens been applied by fire engineers, architects or the NBC to bring a common-sense approach to the standards that should apply to a 90-year-old building.

The only concession to date from the NBC has been to “stop the clock” on the timing of the Year-1 works to enable the Owners time to try and find alternative solutions to those proposed in the Report.

An accurate total cost estimate, prepared this year by a qualified fire audit engineer, is between \$3 million to \$4 million. This will prove financially catastrophic for some owners. They will be forced to sell, and will not be able to realise the full value of their investment due to the DCO applying to the building.

The penalties for non-compliance with the DCO are (pursuant to the Environment Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW)):

- In the case of a company, \$5 million, and for a continuing offence, a further \$50,000 for each day the offence continues;
- In the case of an individual, \$1 million and for a continuing offence, a further \$10,000 for each day the offence continues.

Our Owners’ Committee believes that certain of the of the alleged deficiencies should be remedied. Accordingly, all the owners of our building will be asked to vote to approve the raising of a special levy to meet the costs of the year-1 works. These works will cost over \$500,000 (this vote will take place at an EGM in mid-December 2024). The reality is the works are compulsory and we do not have any choice but to comply with the DCO.

So, the NBC has, without consultation, applied a compulsory and crippling financial liability on the owners of our building. The building is, as noted above, ~90 years old. That there has never been a serious fire incident in the building demonstrates a robust fire-safety record. Our fire alarms and extinguishers are checked quarterly by external fire engineers.

We have brought this matter to the attention of James Griffin MP, our local state member of parliament. Mr Griffin’s office has advised us that at least one other owners’ committee from another building has also been issued with such a DCO. Mr Griffin’s office is currently liaising with the NBC on our behalves in regard to this matter.

We can only hope that common sense prevails and that the years 2-5 upgrade works (in our case) do not have to proceed.

This matter should be of great concern to all property owners in the Northern Beaches local government area. That a municipal body can compulsorily levy a financially crippling liability on a property’s owners – without ANY consultation – is unfair, unreasonable and an egregious example of government overreach.

We recommend that any Owners’ Committees that believe they too have been saddled with this extraordinarily unfair outcome also contact the office of James Griffin:
ElectorateOffice.Manly@parliament.nsw.gov.au

A Very Concerned Strata Owners’ Committee, Manly NSW.

G'day Beaches

Happy New Year! 2025, Year of the Snake, bodes well for a fascinating federal election campaign.

Thank you, Vanessa Wolfe, your January cover all heart with superb butterfly zing. Congratulations Roger from Bilgola Plateau, flattery will get you everywhere. Your kind words praising Tawny and resident wild man Mal Fisher secured Letter of the Month. While Jens Ward, prolific Letter of the Month winner, becomes our first dual Olympic medallist, winning Photo of the Month too, and \$200 to splash at The Mona!

Northern Beaches' State parliament members James, Michael, and Jacqui all share Christmas updates. Frenchs Forest's Marine and Rob's "Choosing Your Uni" platform completely overhauls HSC students' ability to pick the best uni course. Please support Vanja Wilson, on a mission to conquer the deadliest cancer for women in Australia. And cheers Ben Hanson for The Mona's revamping.

Slip, slop, slap and best wishes for a huge year ahead!

Liam



The Tawny Frogmouth

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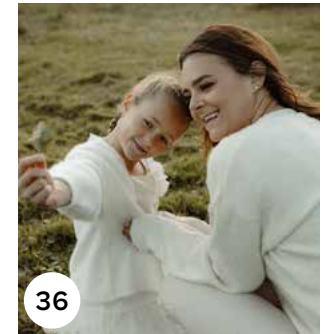
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Acknowledgement of Country

The Tawny Frogmouth acknowledges the Traditional Custodians, the Gayamaygal and Garigal and their Country on which we Tawnies nest today.

By these words we show our respect to all Aboriginal people. We acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging and the spirits and ancestors of the Clans that lived in this area.

Support local this holiday season.

My team and I wish you a safe and relaxing summer break. I hope you enjoy spending time with family and friends and please remember to continue to support local businesses during the festive season.

Best wishes

9977 6411 | zali.steggall.mp@aph.gov.au

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New address: Units 4-6, 8-28 The Corso, Manly NSW 2095

Peninsula Wash Up

Let's go Rockpoolers

Saturday 18 January, the **Ocean Rockpool Tour Charity Swim** is on again, combining fitness and fun, saltwater and sun. Enjoy the Rockpools from Palm Beach to Cabbage Tree. See Vince Bird and Driss Chikhaoui walk the coast, Jordan Moody and Team Orange run past, Pete Hickey on his bike, and swimming groups Collaroy Currents and Narrabeen Nymphs (Oh, behave) and raise awareness of mental health issues such as Dementia, Alzheimer's, Depression and Anxiety. Funds raised go to charities Vinnies, LifelineNB, Gotcha4Life and Hammondcare. Sign up at oceanrockpooltour.com

Relationships Australia NSW

The festive season can be challenging but help is at hand. **Relationships Australia NSW** is a non-profit organisation which has been at the forefront of fostering safe and respectful relationships for over 75 years. From relationship counselling and family dispute resolution, to groupwork and professional training, Relationships Australia help people through challenging life events, as well as equipping them with the skills to strengthen relationships early, creating a foundation for healthier, more resilient connections. With locations across NSW, a Northern Beaches office at Dee Why, in-person, phone, and online support is available. To book a free initial consultation, call **9981 9799** or email northernbeachesfr@ransw.org.au

Turning Pointe's reformer expansion

Dee Why's **Turning Pointe Pilates** is expanding the small group Reformer class offerings, perfect for fit and healthy people wanting to add flexibility and agility to their fitness routines. **Book now for your free initial class in January.** If experiencing back, shoulder, or limb pain, and need specialised attention, get 50% off a private 1:1 corrective exercise session. The Turning Pointe team are known for their expertise, be it with seniors up to their 90s to elite dancers and athletes. Strengthen and improve muscle tone, balance, posture, and function. Call **0435 293 748** or visit turningpointepilates.com.au to book.

Off Corso Manly treasures

Manly is no stranger to fierce competition in the thirst quenching markets, and this summer sees **The Manly Club on Gilbert** - a pitching wedge from the Corso - throwing down the gauntlet,



Rev your Speedo's for 2025's Ocean Rockpool Tour

adding a **9pm till close happy hour**, while for the parents and (godsent) grandparents, also serving up a delectable **Kids Eat Free** menu. Learn more at themanlyclub.com.au and, better yet, pop in at **1 West Promenade, Manly.**

Middle Creek's half price coffee!

Founded on "a little dream, a bit of coffee, and a lot of good company", **OneFour Coffee & Co** has recently set up shop at Narrabeen Lagoon's Middle Creek Reserve. To celebrate the new waterfront location, OneFour Coffee & Co is offering all Tawnies 50% off each coffee as long as you bring this mag in with you before 20 January 2025 for your next caffeineation. Open every day 6:30am-1pm, **including the public holidays**, giddy up to Middle Creek for bargain beans.

Calling all aspiring young writers

Glen Street Theatre and The Tawny Frogmouth are searching for our next **Junior Theatre Reviewer!** Now in its third year, this opportunity enables creative young people to be actively engaged in arts and culture and for young voices to be heard. If you are between 8-13 (or someone you know is) and would like to be our next Reviewer, apply now by telling us in 25 words or less, why you should be the next junior theatre reviewer. The successful young writer will receive a Family Pass (4 tickets) to Josephine Wants To Dance, You Are a Donut, Ratburger, and The Gruffalo's Child with reviews published in The Tawny in 2025. Applications close 31 January. To submit, scan here or visit bit.ly/JuniorReviewer2025

Words: **Liam Carroll**



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Letters to The Tawny

LETTER OF THE MONTH

In praise of Tawny

Dear Editorial and other worthy staff of the most interesting, informed, non-partisan periodical on the Northern Beaches.

As an inveterate punster I was taken by your enviro columnist Mal Fisher's 'Can't "tree huggers" ever see the wood for the trees' (well not quite an accurate headline, but that was the sense of the piece). His amusing musings, clearly designed to lift our spirits for the festive season as in 'I have tried to get into the Christmas spirit, but I can't open the bottle' - held my attention for the whole page.

Reading Mal's material is like a breath of fresh uncontaminated, pure Tasmanian air! Not to be criticised, sanctioned, blamed, exhorted, coerced, scared stiff by climate realists but helped to appreciate the funny side of life is a worthy undertaking. After all, life is amusing, if not absurdly laughable and occasionally, as it's Christmas, we can all be oblivious to the existential threats that electric cars pose to our environment. Oh, sorry that should read ICE's (or inevitably chaotic exigencies).

Yes, Mal's levity, contrasting so ironically with his acute and sometimes sanctimonious (oh sorry, another slip - saturnine) environmental observations is refreshing and welcome. His Christmas jokes, seasonal riddles and jeu de mots on Beethoven's 9th inserted into his narrative makes for good seasonal pun (sorry again - fun).

Keep it up Mal!

Seriously now, to have a local organ like Tawny with read-worthy material which is well considered and interesting is a valuable addition to the Peninsula's literary bon ton. That is, in contrast to: spruiking local human interest stories; guides to where the best restaurants can be found; what wine goes with your truffles; how the property market has appreciated and how to grow your asset or why the 'Beaches is the best place on Earth' all of which underscores and undervalues the unstated privilege of living in this paradise.

Instead, Tawny manages to thread a line between the banal and the responsible and in my view the 'Frogmouth deserves praise. Please continue to keep us informed, interested and amused.

Roger, Bilgola Plateau

Fire Safety on Council Land

Dear Tawny, I'm a concerned resident of North Narrabeen's Lakeside Caravan Park. I'd very much like to draw all readers' attention to something I feel could become highly problematic as summer heatwaves fast approach. Maintenance, upkeep and supervision of the Park is not up to the standard it once was. We live on. That's ok. But the more pressing concern I have is residents making unapproved alterations, renovations, and the like to their properties. One such example is the enclosing of a deck to create what I presume is another room for the occupants. This has not only never been approved by Council - who ultimately own the land - but is also a serious fire hazard due to the way it's been crafted and its proximity to other residents. Council was notified in November 2023

and while someone was sent to inspect the issue earlier in 2024, no action has yet been taken to remedy this issue. If Council, councillors and community members can assist in ensuring safety and approvals processes are upheld within the Park grounds, that would be hugely appreciated, and avoid heartache for all. Best wishes,
Doreen and Kevin

Re: Definition of Climatites (or Another Robbo rant)

Hi Liam, I loved Robbo's attempted comedy piece in the December Tawny. So funny coming up with a puerile little name for people that can follow the science, instead of something nasty like "climate change denier" for people that can't. The funniest bit was asking The Mineral Council of Australia if fossil fuels are subsidised or not. Gosh, that seems to me like asking a fox if it was responsible for raiding the hen house.

Perhaps Robbo should look at a report from The Australia Institute which reports that "Australia provided \$14.5 billion in subsidies to major fossil fuel producers and consumers in 2023-24 alone; an increase of 31% from the 11.1 billion recorded in 2022-23".

In Australia subsidies include fuel tax credits (\$9.6 billion), exploration tax breaks (to encourage local producers to find new sources of oil, coal and gas), direct payments, grants, concessions on aviation fuel (\$1.6 billion), concessions on the Petroleum Resources Rent Tax (\$165 million), \$1.9 billion to assist the Middle Arm petrochemical hub in Darwin, and \$100 million to build roads explicitly for the onshore gas industry in the Northern Territory, to name a few.

If Robbo thinks that there

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are no fossil fuel subsidies, all he need do is look up the government's budget figures. The forward estimates of the federal government have budgeted \$54 billion for fossil fuel subsidies. Total fossil fuel subsidies over the forward budget estimates from all governments (state AND federal) has reached \$65 billion.

Apart from direct subsidies, there are implicit ones. Fossil fuel companies don't pay anything to mitigate the environmental and human health damage that burning their products cause. These costs are born by the wider community. I'd suggest that Robbo calls up an Actuary and ask about how the damaging effects of fossil fuel induced climate change is affecting insurance risks and premiums. He might have noticed how much these premiums have increased over the last few years.

As for subsidies to green energy developers, they are designed to make renewable energy more affordable, just as fossil fuel subsidies have done for oil, coal and gas.

Alan Marel, North Curl Curl

Yay! I've been published

Hello (Again!) Robbo. Wow! Another letter that was hard to decipher (Dec '24). I've established that I'm a Simpleton, but I feel it might be time for you to focus on the Big Issues. Do you compost? Do you actively become involved in bush regeneration? Stand up for Animal Welfare? Probably not! Guess after days composing your letters, you are exhausted. Dump all rubbish in the red bin, pop a steak on the barbie, or maybe eat farmed chicken and suckling pig after chopping down a tree that impinges on your view! Life is good! Oh, almost forgot the veal! Do your bit.

Your ramblings are nonsensical. Get off your soapbox and have a good day.

Anonymous

Pay the Piper

By now all Northern Beaches ratepayers would have received a letter from Council's CEO proposing rate increases for "Funding our Future". The "4 clear options" from which to choose expect ratepayers to bail Council out of the financial mess that they themselves created by spending money they simply didn't have. The out-of-control spending started in 2016 with the ill-conceived amalgamation of the three former Councils. The main culprits responsible for the amalgamation and the misuse of funds have since resigned yet nothing seems to have been learned by their replacements. The financial incompetence continues today.

I would like to propose a fifth clear option for ratepayers to consider: Reverse the amalgamation and, if necessary, sell off Brookvale Oval to pay for it. We now need to "Pay the Piper" and in that regard certain heads must roll. Part of the fifth proposal is that the CEO and the Mayor be immediately dismissed from office. They are ultimately responsible for Council's financial sustainability issues, which in turn has imposed significant costs on our community.

Mick Evans, Narrabeena

Merry Cop This Christmas

I'm all for rewarding achievements but the rate rise is perplexing. It couldn't be based on performance so it must be based on keeping our overpaid council elites on cushy salaries and super schemes, which they manage to do increasingly well,

while never being contactable, accountable, replying to emails or consulting the locals. Cop that, underlings. As for the real issues, let's have a look. Fine revenue is up 30%, meanwhile giving the excuse of saving the environment as they no longer issue a ticket. You no longer have rights. Cop this and pay up, welcome to the new world order. The genius in charge of traffic spent hundreds of thousands on traffic islands and excessive pedestrian crossings at bottle necks, causing grid lock and thousands of dollars damage to cars hitting the traffic islands. Result? Hundreds of thousands spent removing the traffic islands and hundreds of insurance claims. Cop that! But he still has a job. Reverse parking banned at the whim of speeding cyclists on the foot path and if you're not part of the cycle elite, cop that, while putting pedestrians and cars at risk. Little Many boat ramp has wire sticking out of the sand, waiting to impale beachgoers yet again for the third summer. Cop that and proceed at your own risk. And there is so much more. I hate to say it but Henry from previous council was easier to deal with. Merry Christmas! **Percy Protest Pelican**

Proposed nuclear power plants

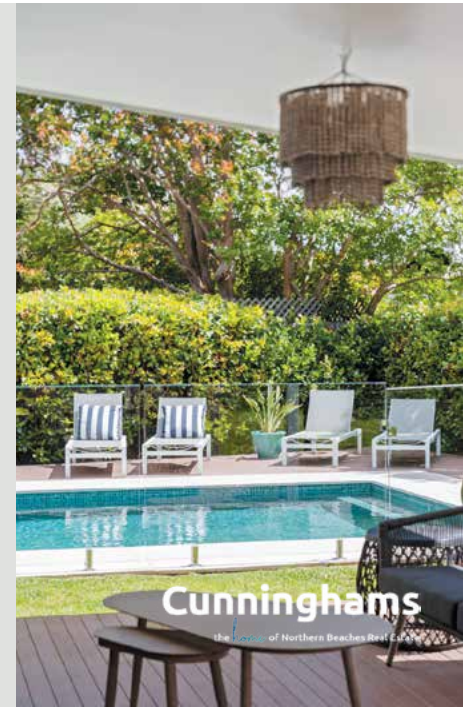
The leader of the Federal Opposition, Perter Dutton, is proposing seven nuclear power plants be built to solve our electricity supply problems. Apart from the time and cost problems associated with such a proposal, two major risk factors seem to have been ignored to-date.

When a nuclear power plant has finished its life cycle, possibly 70 years, it has to be dismantled and the site cleaned or locked up for decades and possibly centuries until the

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radiation subsidies. Where and how are the wastes during operation and after decommissioning to be stored?

However, the biggest unstated risk is of deliberate sabotage from within Australia or an attack on the plant and/or its supply network. We can see the risk to supply and the environment that an attack on a nuclear power plant could have now in Ukraine.

These risks need to be accounted for in any assessment as to the viability of nuclear power generation in Australia.

Peter Fuller, Narrabeen

Lobby for crossing

Hello Tawny. What is the best way to petition for a pedestrian crossing on Sydney Road at Balgowlah, between Wanganella St and Woodland St? There isn't a safe place to cross on this section of the road, unless you

walk all the way to the traffic lights on either aforementioned road and I observe countless people trying to cross at the midway point, which is indeed where Sydney Rd curves, further reducing visibility for all. It needn't take a fatal accident to make a change.

How can you support people out of their cars when the infrastructure does not encourage them to do so? (Welcome to Sydney...) As a cyclist and pedestrian, I suggest a crossing just east of West Street, essentially from in front of Balgowlah Preschool across to the top of Angle Street. Thank you!

Grace

Hallowe'en Blues

Now not to wax too lyrical, but as a perverse version of Hansel and Gretel, in the wake of Hallowe'en you can still follow the lolly wrapper trail to

the house of the wicked witch you know. Days, no weeks later, gutters, verges and footpaths lay buried beneath the stuff, and I'm not exaggerating for dramatic effect here. Eventually it'll get washed down drains and canals into local waterways, because no-one it seems can be even bothered to just pick up other people's rubbish. And who's to wear the mea culpa for this one: kids themselves, parents who don't instruct the latter, packaging industry? One thing's for sure, the ultimate victim is good ole' Mother Nature yet again. Her skin lies polluted in a fine layer of plastic and foil. Good one.

John Lettoof, Avalon

The Tawny Frogmouth invites the people of the Beaches to send in letters to mail@thetawnyfrogmouth.com.au

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DRINK IN OR TAKEAWAY

Michael Regan MP

Summer update

I'm thrilled to see more independent voices here on the Northern Beaches, with Pittwater electing **Jacqui Scruby** as their State Member. It is clear our community values independent representation and understands our effectiveness, especially in a minority government.

It's great to now have another voice lobbying the NSW Labor Government to prioritise the re-opening of the Narrabeen athletics track. The insurance claim for flood damage is well progressed and consultants are now preparing options to make it more resilient to flooding.

However, I'm concerned there is likely to be a significant funding gap between the insurance payout and making the new track more resilient to flooding. With so many schools and clubs impacted by the closure, we are working hard to secure the additional funding, so our community can once again train at this first-class facility.

Nurses and midwives at Northern Beaches Hospital play a critical role in caring for our community. Healthscope - the operator of Northern Beaches Hospital - is paid by the NSW Government to treat public patients in our region. But ultimately, our local hospital is run privately, for profit.

Right now, nurses and midwives from Northern Beaches Hospital are in enterprise agreement negotiations with Healthscope. Despite their tireless work, our nurses and midwives are paid up to 16% less than their Healthscope counterparts in Queensland. What's more, increased staff-to-patient ratios being rolled out at public hospitals under the NSW Government's Safe Staffing policy will not apply to the private Northern Beaches Hospital. We're hearing from local nurses and midwives that these factors strain staff wellbeing and patient care.

We are at risk of being left behind. To ensure our community receives the care it deserves, we call on private hospital operator Healthscope to provide a 15% pay rise for nurses and midwives, and implement staff-to-patient ratios consistent with the standards being introduced in NSW public hospitals under the Government's Safe Staffing policy.

Please sign the petition on my website www.michaelreganmp.com to demand better pay and safer staffing ratios for our nurses and midwives at Northern Beaches Hospital. This is



Supporting our nurses and midwives at NBH

crucial to attract and retain the skilled nurses and midwives we depend on.

I welcomed the Environment Protection Authority's (EPA) decision to issue a \$30,000 fine to ADCO Construction, for breaching water pollution controls at the new Forest High School site. The breach involved sediment run-off polluting waterways that feed into Manly Dam.

Manly Dam is a jewel of the Northern Beaches and I take any threat to its environmental values extremely seriously. I have written to the NSW Environment Minister, advocating for the fine to be reinvested into environmental protections and restoration projects at Manly Dam. It is only fair that the community affected by this pollution sees some tangible benefit from this penalty.

As climate change drives increasingly frequent and intense rain events, I have also asked the NSW Government to review and strengthen sediment run-off conditions in the planning system to better reflect the impacts of climate change.

Finally, can I wish everyone a safe and joyful summer holiday season. I hope you can take time to connect with loved ones and get out and about in our beautiful part of the world, the world's best kept secret.

Words: **Michael Regan MP**, Member for Wakehurst

Stay up to date with Michael Regan MP's latest announcements and sign up for his e-newsletter at michaelreganmp.com and follow [@michaelreganmp](https://twitter.com/michaelreganmp) on socials

Authorised by Michael Regan MP. Funded using Parliamentary Entitlements.



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A Merry Manly Yuletide

James Griffin MP

Merry Christmas

Hopefully you all manage to get a restful and enjoyable Christmas break this year. Please consider spending your time and money with our local businesses. They will greatly appreciate the support, much more than an international competitor.

I pay tribute to those who continue to work over the Christmas / New Year break – ambulance and hospital staff, transport personnel, police, surf life savers and those serving through the various community organisations. On behalf of the electorate, we say thank you.

As the excitement of Christmas gives way to fun in the sun, the Manly electorate is overwhelmingly spoilt for choice ... from the rolling surf on our sandy shores to harbour activities and bushland walks.

Be sure to be sun safe. Slip on clothing that covers your arms and legs. Slop on SPF-50 (or higher) sunscreen, Slap on

a hat. Seek shade and slide on sunglasses.

In our various suburbs, we are spoilt for restaurants, cafes, and other food outlets. There are places to 'pig out', 'hang out', 'work out', 'look out', or just 'be out' and enjoy what the Manly electorate has to offer.

On behalf of my family and staff, I wish everyone a very happy, safe, prosperous, and healthy 2025.

Proposed Council Rate Increase

There is plenty of finger-pointing going on about the proposed Council rate increase.

During the holiday period, I encourage local ratepayers to view the Northern Beaches Council's proposal for a special rate increase over the next three years. The Council claims an increase is necessary to maintain current services.

The four options range from limiting any rate rise to

the NSW Government's rate pegging increase, currently at 3.8%, through to adding a further 10% each year for the next three years. The basic rate pegging option suggests a reduction in services, while the special rate variations suggest maintaining, improving, or increasing services.

I am aware that many of us are facing a cost-of-living crisis, and any additional rate burden may be difficult at this time.

That's why I am encouraging readers to visit the **Northern Beaches Council website**:

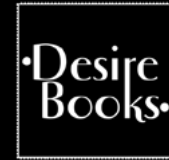
- Under 'Have Your Say', select, 'Funding Our Future'
- or type into the search bar, yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/funding-our-future
- or scan the QR code:

The closing date for submissions is 12 January.



Words: **James Griffin MP**, Member for Manly

Authorised by James Griffin MP. Funded using Parliamentary Entitlements.



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Jacqui shows Premier Minns Mona Vale's unfinished Rd

Jacqui Scrubi MP

Hit the ground running

Thank you to the voters of Pittwater for giving me the privilege to represent you in the NSW Parliament. It is a great honour. Now I'm in office I am acutely aware of my responsibilities to deliver on my campaign promises. One of those was to hit the ground running, and that's exactly what I've done.

In the few weeks since I was sworn in, I have met with community and advocacy groups, striking nurses, hospital staff, Ministers and the NSW Premier and Deputy Premier. The two weeks when Parliament was sitting – my first two weeks in office – proved more productive for Pittwater than I could have hoped. Being an independent has opened doors. Ministers have worked with me to resolve issues.

I've had some wins, like getting Premier Minns to visit the unfinished Mona Vale Road, for him to see first-hand the mess we've been left with. The road is unsafe. It's only a matter of time before there's a fatality. Showing this to the Premier was just one important part of building our case for urgent action. Another is the "Finish Mona Vale Road Petition" that I urge you to sign.

Visit jacquiscruby.com.au/finish_mona_vale_rd_petition or scan here:



The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education has now confirmed upgrades for Pittwater High School and the Minister for Health has responded to strong representations against allied health worker cuts at Mona Vale Hospital by committing to consultation.

We are also facing some big council rates rises. State and federal governments have a lot to answer for when it comes to cost shifting to local councils. Yes, our councils need to manage budgets efficiently and deliver services – and cuts have been made – but as your state MP I'll be advocating for greater government funding, particularly to manage the increasing costs associated with extreme weather and rates reform.

I'm supporting nurses' claims for a 15% pay rise, so we don't keep losing them to Queensland where the pay is better. I'm pushing Northern Beaches Hospital (NBH) to implement the same nurse ratios and pay as in our public hospitals. And I'm working with Wakehurst MP Michael Regan to get the NSW Government to fund a rebuild of Narrabeen Athletics Track and find a better short-term solution than the inadequate grass track.

2025 will be jam-packed. I'll hold town hall meetings on different topics: eBike Regulation; Home Insurance Cost Increases; Planning Changes and Drug Reform. But I also like to meet people where they are at, supporting initiatives like the recent Surfers for Climate Trade Up Cup, which was a chance to talk to our local tradies about how to capitalise on home electrification.

Solar not only helps households save money and be energy-independent, but it redirects money into the hands of local tradies rather than into offshore fossil fuel companies. Sitting in the surf, you contemplate and chat about life a little differently – so surfing and policy-together isn't such a crazy idea. I'm also personally stoked that Ain't That Swell was my first podcast as an MP.

I wish you all a wonderful break and a happy, healthy and prosperous 2025, and a special thank you to all those people who keep our essential services going over the holidays and keep us all safe.

Words: **Jacqui Scruby**, MP for Pittwater

To talk to Jacqui, or if you have an event or meeting you'd like Jacqui to attend, call (02) 9999 3599 or email pittwater@parliament.nsw.gov.au and visit www.jacquiscruby.com.au for all updates.



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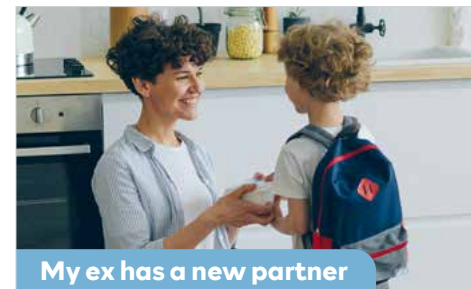
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My ex has a new partner

The introduction of your ex's new partner into the lives of your children can be a stressful time, especially if they try to be overly familiar or overly involved in the early days of the relationship.

That said, and subject to a situation where a new partner may pose an actual risk to your kids, there is little you can do to exclude them from your kids' lives, and trying to do so, will, without question cause stress for your children. This is an adult issue about which kids should be spared.

Some tips:


- Do ask to meet with your ex's new partner. This may help to allay any concerns you have about them.
- Don't speak badly about your ex's new partner to your kids – this will only make them uncomfortable when they have to see them.
- Don't make your kids feel bad about saying positive things about your ex's new partner. Be happy that your ex's new partner is treating the children well and that the kids are happy when they're around.



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Education

Choosing Your Uni

The HSC might be finished but the next step for students, choosing the right university, is looming large. It's a high-stakes decision: degrees take years to complete and cost tens of thousands of dollars.

Just in time, discovering the right course has become easier with the launch of a new AI-powered platform, masterminded locally. Northern Beaches wife-and-husband entrepreneurs, Marine Hautemont and Rob Malicki have launched the **Choosing Your Uni** (CYU) platform, leveraging their years of experience running a popular YouTube channel (@**choosingyouruni**) that has been viewed millions of times and helped tens of thousands of students to choose their uni.

The platform simplifies the often-overwhelming process of choosing the right field of study and finding the ideal university by offering personalised recommendations tailored to each student's strengths, interests, and preferences. And it is all in one single platform.

"The platform features two core AI tools," Marine said. "The What to Study Quiz offers personalised career and field-of-study recommendations, while the UniMatch by CYU tool shortlists universities based on criteria like location, size, facilities, and courses."

There are more than 7000 different degrees and courses across all Australian universities so it can be overwhelming. "This isn't about directing students into any particular option" said Marine, "It's about opening doors and allowing students (and their parents) to uncover the choices that suit them best, regardless of where those courses might be".

Rob said Choosing Your Uni distils these courses into fields of study and then into options based on a student's profile and preferences. "With university fees and HECS debt top of everyone's minds, families and students can't afford to make an ill-informed choice," he said.

Nationally, about 15% of new undergraduate students drop out of uni within the first year. "That's tens of thousands of people who, for various reasons, don't end up in the right degree," said Rob. "The cost to students, institutions and Government is millions of dollars, not to mention years of individuals' time."

It can also be incredibly difficult for students from regional areas, or equity groups like



Marine, Rob and Lumen lighting up decision making



first-in-family, to navigate the journey to uni. CYU helps these students with independent, personalised advice.

Choosing Your Uni includes a wealth of resources, such as university review videos, employment trend insights, career-related lifestyle information, and tools for parents and students to share and discuss relevant options.

The platform uses an interactive AI guide, called Lumen, to assist students with personalised advice, helping them navigate the journey to university with confidence. Lumen can answer detailed questions, such as specific comparisons between different courses, while considering an individual's unique circumstances and interests.

Choosing Your Uni launched in November and has already seen hundreds of high school students, careers advisors and parents joining up. The CYU team is already fielding requests from local schools to do presentations, or for students to join the team's "Content Creation and Social Media" work experience program.

This new venture marks the next chapter for Marine and Rob, who previously founded AIM Overseas, a multi-million dollar company that enabled over 6,000 Australian university students to participate in overseas study programs. Their expertise in education has already transformed thousands of lives, and they now aim to bring that same innovative spirit to university selection, this time to help millions of students.

Your journey to uni starts with Choosing Your Uni. Scan here for a 1-minute demonstration explainer of the platform. For all info visit choosingyouruni.com



Words: **Liam Carroll**

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Fuel security: What happens if the bowsers start to run dry?

After a year-long \$150,000 Freedom of Information (FOI) fight to keep secret their plans for dealing with a fuel security emergency, the Australian Government has been forced to come clean and hand them over. Should we be reassured or alarmed?

There's no single fuel emergency scenario. Australian Governments rightly 'wargame' all sorts of possibilities to see how they, the Australian economy and the Australian people might cope with a major disruption of liquid fuel supplies. Australia still predominantly runs on petroleum products, without which our nation would come to a crashing halt.

State-based fuel emergency

If the pipeline between the Gore Bay Marine Terminal, west of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, and the storage tanks at Clyde near Parramatta that feed the nearby road tanker loading facilities were to fail, there would be fuel disruption across the greater Sydney metropolitan area and the State. This would be an emergency that would engage the NSW Minister for Energy, who has extensive powers under the Energy and Utilities Administrative Act (NSW), and the NSW Department of Planning and Environment, keepers of the Petroleum Supply Disruption Response Plan.

The Commonwealth Government might keep a watching brief on the State's response, and offer assistance where required, but would not formally get involved. Each State and Territory has their own fuel security legislation and response plans.

National fuel emergency

Only if there was a pending or actual nationwide shortage would the Federal Government step take charge. A range of scenarios exist, mostly external, that could cause a national issue. A scenario in the 2019 Fuel Security emergency report gave a plausible scenario: a developing conflict in the Middle East where ships were being attacked in the Straits of Hormuz – at the end of an intense Australian bushfire season at which domestic fuel stocks were depleted. The 82-page 'National Liquid Fuel Emergency



Oil crisis 1973. Is it back to the future?

Response Plan', which is now finally public, tells the planned response story.

Light handed measures

At the outset of a crisis, the public would start to hear of a new acronym, NOSEC (The National Oil Supplies Emergency Committee), chaired by the Commonwealth but including State government officials and large fuel suppliers such as Ampol, BP, Viva (formerly Shell) and ExxonMobil, would meet up and make an initial assessment of the situation. Officials would seek information on the supply situation and try to avoid startling the horses.

Rising prices caused by reduced supply will cause a market response whereby less fuel is used, an estimated reduction of 4-6%. The Government may also start eco-driving, car-pooling and public transport campaigns. The ACCC may authorise fuel companies to co-ordinate activities and to give priority to certain customers (normally a breach of the Trade Practices Act, until an emergency has been declared). They would also commence intense monitoring of retail fuel prices against international prices to discourage and, if necessary, prevent price gouging.

Alert phase

The preference would be to let industry respond but it may become necessary to invoke powers under the Commonwealth's Liquid Fuel Emergency (LFE) Act. The Federal government will watch to see how light-handed market measures and any state responses are work-

ing and how the international circumstances that caused the supply issues are playing out. Officials will advise and prepare for LFE implementation, allocating and placing resources on standby while preparing necessary legal documents and media releases. State ministers must be consulted (a legal requirement under the LFE Act) before a fuel emergency can be declared.

Hard measures

Once an emergency is declared, other measures may kick in. The LFE Act overrides any State measures in play. The LFE Act allows the government to direct fuel refinery products and quantity outputs. That may have only limited effect as we have only two refineries now.

All participants in the fuel supply chain may have minimum stock requirements placed on them and be required to provide the government with near-real-time fuel stock data. This would be used to prevent excessive drawdowns. A temporary reduction in fuel standards to assist with supply may also be considered.

Fuel distribution would be controlled by the Federal Government to ensure even distribution and to direct fuels to certain priority customers. It would likely invoke fuel rationing (e.g. \$40 of fuel per customer per day) or odd licence plates one day, even the next. If the situation worsens, fuels could be directed to particular users: Defence, ships, transport vehicles, police/ambulance/fire, corrective services, public transport, state emergency services and health.

The government co-ordination requirements would be considerable: intra-government (Attorney Generals, ACCC, Agriculture and Water, Communications, Industry, jobs and small business, Defence, Home Affairs, Social Security, DFAT, PM&C, Treasury and Finance), inter-government and with industry. Media will be engaged to announce the declaration and to keep the nation informed of measures.

There is a plan, but...

The Government has good planning documentation in place. But the release of the documents reveals some concerning issues. In a 2019 exercise report, it was revealed that it might take 21 days to declare an emergency. That concern has to be understood in the context of typical in-country diesel supplies of 24 to 26 days. It's not clear how the government estimated that

period, but it's hugely problematic.

It may be an accumulation of the need to approach a crisis in an iterative manner, determined by legislative requirements, the number of Federal agencies involved, the number of stakeholders beyond the Federal government, a lack of clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the various players, the lack of clear guidance on the order things ought to be done and a lack of clear thresholds for steps to be taken.

In April 2019, the Morrison Government announced a review of the LFE Act, however this did not proceed beyond scoping and planning because it was overtaken by events, mainly the COVID-19 pandemic. Nothing seems to have happened under the Albanese government. One must presume this 21-day implementation timeframe still exists and that's a big vulnerability while our national fuel stocks remain so low.

Panic stations?

Another deficiency in planning is the presumption Australians will act rationally if a fuel emergency commences. COVID toilet paper hoarding showed us that citizens acting rationally is not to a given. If diesel were to run out, food would quickly run out. We have just over a week of dry goods consumption available at our supermarkets and about a week for chilled and frozen foods. Pharmacies will start running out of medicine in about a week. The thought of not having food in cupboards and fridges or prescription medicines would likely exercise people's minds a lot more than not having toilet paper.

Fuel security is an important national security issue. The most recent forced release of information under our FOI laws shows that on top of the limited supplies we have in-country at any time, we're likely to have a three-week delay before full response measures can be put in place. But by that time, the bulk of our national buffer may already be depleted. Things could turn ugly fast and rapidly move beyond the scenarios the Federal and State governments have war-gamed.

But it's not obvious anyone cares. It's not just a muck-up; it's an inexcusable national security failure for which we may all pay a heavy price in troubled and uncertain times.

Words: **Rex Patrick**, Michael West Media

IMAGE: CRUDEOILPEAK.INFO





Vanessa, a Wolfe in bright abstract clothing

Cover Artist

Vanessa Wolfe

How long have you lived on the Northern Beaches? For the past 16 years - minus a couple of years living in Germany - and have had the pleasure of residing in Manly, Freshwater, Dee Why and Cromer. There are so many gorgeous suburbs.

What inspired your cover? I had, and still have a collage project that is yet to come to fruition, using Lindt 70% Dark Chocolate wrappers that I have been collecting for almost 5 years now. During the process of developing the idea, I came up with the thought of using an anatomical heart to be part of it. Then the name "My Dark Heart Project" came about. I started doodling small hearts with patterns and then a flood of ideas around different types of hearts evolved. I have at least 10 of these hearts - all My "something" Heart. The anatomical heart became more stylised and quite a number of the hearts are quirky and a play on words. This Tawny cover is "My Papillon Heart" and is based on butterfly wings.

What inspires your work in general? Essentially my feelings. Whatever is inside me that needs a path out. I was a dancer growing up and in early adulthood. That was my way of expressing myself. I've always been musical and creative. My art is just another extension of that. My painting always involves music and inevitably dancing during the process.

How would you describe your art? Describing my art is difficult. I have several different ways of working. I started with collage works, then

abstract painting has become a real passion. The hearts are an exciting project. I also adore working with clay. If I had to put it in a nutshell my style is bold in colour, sometimes erratic and wild, and most of it evokes a feeling of movement.

What is your favourite part of the process? When painting abstracts it is the very beginning. This is where I let loose with colours and chaos! This is the wild, free part, where it's pure fun and there is no direction, just joy in creating. With the hearts it is the ending where I can see the finished idea in completion, it's very satisfying.

Which artists or inspiring people, dead or alive, would you most like to have dinner with? There was a book released earlier this year by Katy Hessel called The Story of Art Without Men. I would happily have dinner with every one of the women in this book. However, to be a tad cliché: Frida Kahlo, Georgia O'Keefe and Lindy Lee would be high on the list. Then there's the dancer Gabrielle Roth and the amazing Gina Chick! I'm of a generation where I still struggle with the juggle of trying to be everything to everyone. These women forged their own path and ways of working that honoured themselves and their creative natures.

What are you currently working on? I'm preparing for a Solo Exhibition called "Colour, Light and Energy" being held at the Northern Beaches Gallery, opening Saturday 18 January, for two weeks. I'll also be showcasing more hearts at a group exhibition called "Where's Your Head At" curated by @c._art._el at Luna Studios in Newtown, opening 5 February 2025. Running alongside that is extending My Heart Series into t-shirts, bags, badges, and stickers. And I'm always working on abstracts, along with other diverse projects.

What's your favourite thing about what you do? Everything! If I was able to create all day long, I would. I love listening to music, dancing, and painting simultaneously. It's a full mind/body work out. It's truly my happy place.

How can people support your work? Visit my Instagram @vanessa.wolfe.art and website www.vanessawolfeart.com or, even better, come to an exhibition!

Interview: **Liam Carroll**



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Ben with his father Peter and uncle Arthur

The Tawny Nightjar

Cheers Ben Hanson

Australians take their pubs very seriously, especially the Northern Beaches faithful. So, seven years ago, when passers-by of the hallowed turf a wisp beyond the nexus of Pittwater and Barrenjoey Roads first realised the iconic Mona Vale Hotel had been rebranded The Parkhouse, community outrage, righteous indignation and profound sadness promptly ensued. What the hell's happened to the Mona?!

Ben Hanson didn't know it then, in 2017 he was a high-flying Channel 9 cameraman in the midst of a storied career spanning 21 years in Sydney, the UK and North America, filming Yasser Arafat's funeral, capturing the Athens Olympics and shooting Barack Obama in the White House library. A master lensman indeed, but the physical brunt of being a cameraman had finally taken its toll.

"My body basically just broke down," says Ben. "Bulging discs, carpal tunnel, I needed to find something else to do." Being a glutton for punishment, the choice of what to do was simple, become a publican!

With his wife and 1-year-

old son, the Hanson family ventured north to Hawks Nest, John Howard's favourite holiday destination, and with money Ben had put away over his career he took the plunge and became the proud owner and publican of The Tea Gardens Hotel.

"It was a baptism of fire," says Ben. "But whatever it took, I was going to make it work, I had to make it work. I had no plan B." Bull-headed Ben got busy, following his family mantra, "Work hard and you can succeed at anything."

His father Peter a testament to this, the founder of Ben's Bakery that first opened on the Corso in 1977, becoming a Beaches institution and giving a young Ben firsthand experience of tireless dedication. With a clear path forward and failure not an option, for five years, 80 hours a week, weekends, holidays, the cameraman became the publican.

"Tea Gardens is a small place, a 4,000 people town, I was scrutinised very heavily," explains Ben. "Everything at the Hotel was broken down or breaking down. I'd be racing round like a chook with my

head cut off, frantically fixing ATMs, refrigeration systems, you name it, and the locals loved it! My commitment won their respect."

Successfully transforming Tea Gardens Hotel into a thriving, family friendly, Myall River oasis, and with developments 18 months ago first taking shape that Arthur Laundry, Ben's uncle and hotel industry powerhouse, was set to take back full control of The Parkhouse, who better to return to his Northern Beaches home and mastermind The Mona's revamping?

"The Mona is an icon, and my role now is to bring back the love," says Ben. "My ethos at Tea Gardens was to create an awesome, family-friendly venue for all ages to enjoy, and that's exactly the same ethos I'm bringing to The Mona."

That ethos is already clear. It starts with the Ben's Bakery café overlooking the newest and biggest kids' playground in a pub anywhere on the Beaches. It continues with striking murals, classic vintage photos, a commitment to showcasing live music from local bands, the cheapest schnitties on the Beaches, epic cocktail specials, a range of sponsorships of local sporting and community clubs, attracting dedicated staff who genuinely froth The Mona, and razor sharp schooie prices.

"Without doubt, this is by far the toughest job I've ever had," smiles Ben. "I'm loving every minute of it."

Visit themona.com.au and follow [@monavalehotel](https://www.instagram.com/monavalehotel) on socials. Most importantly, get to The Mona in person.

Words: **The Tawny Nightjar**

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"For me, the biggest thing is bringing back 'The Mona' and 'Ben's Bakery Café.' I want the pub to have that local, relaxed feel again. Both venues have been institutions on the beaches," said Hanson.

"I want 'The Mona' to be recognised as a terrific, family-friendly, fun, and inclusive venue for people of all ages. We aim to create something that will be enjoyed within the community for years to come, whether it's by sporting groups or locals alike"



Pictured: Ben Hanson and Father Peter

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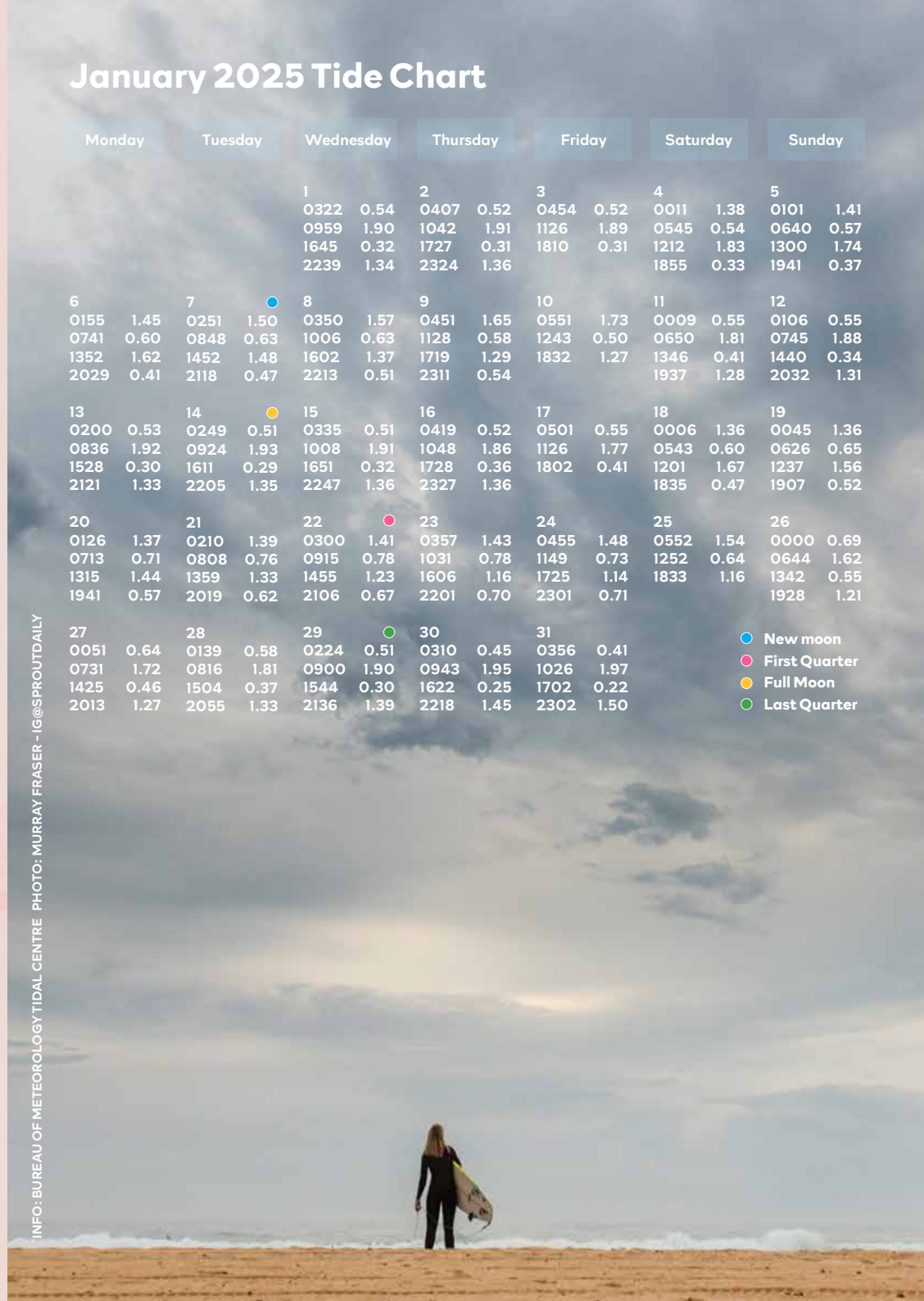
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January 2025 Tide Chart

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
		1 0322 0.54 0959 1.90 1645 0.32 2239 1.34	2 0407 0.52 1042 1.91 1727 0.31 2324 1.36	3 0454 0.52 1126 1.89 1810 0.31	4 0011 1.38 0545 0.54 1212 1.83 1855 0.33	5 0101 1.41 0640 0.57 1300 1.74 1941 0.37
6 0155 1.45 0741 0.60 1352 1.62 2029 0.41	7 0251 1.50 0848 0.63 1452 1.48 2118 0.47	8 0350 1.57 1006 0.63 1602 1.37 2213 0.51	9 0451 1.65 1128 0.58 1719 1.29 2311 0.54	10 0551 1.73 1243 0.50 1832 1.27	11 0009 0.55 0650 1.81 1346 0.41 1937 1.28	12 0106 0.55 0745 1.88 1440 0.34 2032 1.31
13 0200 0.53 0836 1.92 1528 0.30 2121 1.33	14 0249 0.51 0924 1.93 1611 0.29 2205 1.35	15 0335 0.51 1008 1.91 1651 0.32 2247 1.36	16 0419 0.52 1048 1.86 1728 0.36 2327 1.36	17 0501 0.55 1126 1.77 1802 0.41	18 0006 1.36 0543 0.60 1201 1.67 1835 0.47	19 0045 1.36 0626 0.65 1237 1.56 1907 0.52
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- New moon
- First Quarter
- Full Moon
- Last Quarter

INFO: BUREAU OF METEOROLOGY TIDAL CENTRE PHOTO: MURRAY FRASER - IG@SPROUTDAILY



BROOKVALE ARTS DISTRICT

Photo: Kayapa Creative Studio / Art: Ben Brown



Wishing You a Creative 2025

The team at Brookvale Arts District wish you a Happy New Year and a successful 2025. We will continue to initiate, welcome and support creative collaborations, bringing people together to create the best version of Brookvale we can all imagine.

When you're in Brookvale Arts District remember to check out our BAD Poster open-air art gallery along Mitchell Road. Scan the QR code on each poster with your mobile device and enjoy the interactive Augmented Reality experience.

Plus, you can buy your favourite BAD Posters from the online BAD Shop (brookvaleartsdistrict.org.au/shop)

Posters from left to right: Dan Marshall / Brentos / Lara Allport / NICO / Luke Lucas



Silicon Brooky

Hey Juno, tell me why

Newport's Michelle Gilmore has a clear goal with her tech start up Juno - to make user research accessible to everyone, because the world becomes a better place when more voices are heard.

What is Juno? An AI (artificial intelligence) customer researcher, conducting in-depth research with humans, to understand how they feel and think.

How did you know there was an appetite for this type of innovation? Companies big and small want to know how their customers and potential customers really think; Juno enables this at a fraction of the price and time of traditional methods.

What led you to this opportunity? We spent over a decade listening to real people share their stories and needs. After years of hands-on research, we knew there had to be a faster, more effective way to uncover results - so we built Juno.

How do traditional surveys underperform? They only scratch the surface; Juno uncovers the 'why'. It can ask why someone chose a cheaper product, why they prefer a competitor, why they love (or don't love) yours. The why is where the magic is, where great decisions are made.

What sets Juno apart? It's the only AI-powered researcher created by true practitioners. We engage in meaningful interviews that dig deep into what really matters to people and why - whether it's understanding your customers' desires or uncovering what motivates your employees. Juno captures results in real time and at scale, making the process easy and efficient, and allows you to access valuable results without traditional methods' hefty costs and delays. Tell Juno what you want to know and from whom, it does the rest.

What problem are you solving? Giving all businesses, big and small, a chance to understand what's going on for their customers and potential customers. It's also giving real people



the chance to have their say, to give proper feedback to companies and lead to better products, services and experience for all.

Who are your customers? Anyone who wants to know what humans are thinking and feeling. Could be the government, a major bank, a day care centre, restaurant, newsagent. Anyone wanting to know what someone else thinks.

What are you doing to expand? Juno is a global product, so we aren't solely focused on a single market. We've got customers from the UK, Japan, Africa, USA, Europe, and Australia.

What have been the biggest challenges? Knowing when to focus and when to explore. We're constantly seeking data to learn from and signals to read, at the same time we need to make bets and progress.

What have been your biggest triumphs? Partnering with Blackbird on our first funding round and being able to hire remarkable people to make this dream happen!

What's your favourite thing about life on the Northern Beaches? Nature. Being able to step out from the chaos and feel the saltwater on our faces and the sand on our feet is a gift.

Any wisdom for others considering their own innovative, entrepreneurial path? Be ready to work very hard, for a long time, with big ups and big downs. It's not steady and it's not certain. If that feels exciting - jump. It's a beautiful thing if you are doing it for the right reasons. It rarely works for the wrong ones.

Scan here, visit heyjuno.co and follow on LinkedIn to learn more about Juno's AI-powered evolution in customer research.



Interview: **Liam Carroll**



Vanja and her young family, ready for the fight of a lifetime

Health & Wellbeing

The deadliest cancer for women in Australia

Vanja Wilson is on a mission to raise ovarian cancer awareness, support and survival.

It was May 2024, Mother's Day week. I had a busy start to the year, flying in and out of conferences, attending work events and climbing the corporate ladder, while navigating family life with two young daughters aged 4 and 8.

My husband and I were driving to school pickup, and I asked him: "Do I really need this colonoscopy? The prep is awful and I'm sure the blood in my stool isn't a big deal. I've never felt better". Who knew that his response would save my life: "Vanja, you need to just do it. What would you do if this was one of our daughters?"

I nodded agreeingly and went in for a routine colonoscopy on 10 May. As I woke up in the busy recovery room, the doctor suddenly pulled the curtain and the look on his face said it all. Everything is a blur after this moment, but I will remember his sentence forever: "We found a tumour in your bowel."

Calling my husband to collect me from the hospital, I could barely form a sentence. That was the day life changed forever. Celebrating Mother's Day that weekend, I was in constant tears.

My worst fear was becoming reality, leaving my two girls motherless. Having lost my dad and brother, I'm no stranger to grief and I will do anything to spare them that trauma. They are my motivation to fight this battle, cancer knocked on the wrong door.

The days that followed included various scans, tests and before I knew it, I was prepping for major surgery to remove 3 tumours in my ovary, bowel and abdomen. I was diagnosed with stage 4 Ovarian Cancer, the deadliest cancer for women in Australia.

6 months earlier, I had discovered a lump on my tummy and while it wasn't painful, I saw two different GPs and had it reviewed via external

ultrasound. The results stated a possible muscle tear or scar tissue from my two C-sections, so I left it.

That lump was actually a tumour.

I often wonder, if I'd found it in my breast, the instant action would have been a mammogram (especially as my mum is a breast cancer survivor), but I never suspected anything sinister. Nor did the GPs, the radiologist, my husband or any of the many friends I told. Our awareness about Ovarian Cancer wasn't just low, it was non-existent.

That awareness gap has now been well and truly filled with crippling scary statistics about the devastating outcomes for women with my disease. A mere 49% of us survive past 5 years. In Australia, a woman dies every 8 hours, yet I knew nothing of it. There is currently no screening available to this symptomless 'silent killer' as it's often called, so most cases, 70%, are discovered in stage 3 or 4.

On 10 June, I underwent a hugely successful de-bulking surgery where all my cancer was removed and started my weekly chemotherapy regime for the next 16 weeks. Chemo is widely known for its brutal effects on the body, so I'll spare you the details, but let's just say that it was a test in resilience.

Shockingly, whilst side effects are better managed today, the regime is the same one used to treat Ovarian Cancer for the last 30 years. No major breakthroughs. I incorrectly assumed that huge advances had been made, only to find out that I managed to catch the cancer that has been left underfunded, almost unchanged and seemingly

forgotten.

Why? I asked. Is it an ageist matter? The average age of the disease is 64. Is there a stigma to reproductive cancers? Perhaps. It could be a gender issue but with breast cancer awareness and funding through the roof, it's possibly a mix of everything.

Prostate cancer currently receives over \$19M more federal funding than Ovarian Cancer, despite a survival rate of 96% vs. 49%.

Motivated to make a change, I've become an official **OCRFB (Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation)** ambassador and proudly raised \$25K through our recent "Frocktober" event at my husband's gym Bump in Dee Why. Only through research funding will things change.

As my chemo-journey re-

cently came to a welcomed end, the daunting reality and fear of recurrence grows stronger. My cancer has a 90% chance of coming back. Due to my genetic disposition, the PBS does not fund the only maintenance drug that may help keep this disease away.

Keen to throw everything and anything at staying alive and buying more time with my precious family, I've withdrawn my entire superfund to self-fund the medication.

As I settle into my new reality, grateful for positive outcomes since my diagnosis

yet acutely aware of my unfavourable survival odds, I'm making it my mission to scream as loudly as I can to raise awareness.

February is Ovarian Cancer awareness month.

Our women are dying, and on their journey, they face multiple rounds of gruelling, yet often ineffective treatment to buy themselves more time with loved ones. Let's empower scientists to make the breakthroughs that we need to survive.

Words: **Vanja Wilson**

Support Vanja directly

Please donate to her GoFundMe by scanning here or visiting: gofundme.com/f/strength-and-support-for-vanja-wilsons-battle-with-cancer

Support the Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation Visit ocrf.com.au



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Co-create a relationship that feels fulfilling

The Love Scout

What is relationship counselling?

Your best investment in love and life

If you've ever tried assembling flat-pack furniture with your partner, you know that relationships don't come with an instruction manual. That's where relationship counselling comes in - a safe, supportive space to make sense of the mess, reassemble trust, and maybe even laugh along the way.

So, what exactly is relationship counselling? Think of it as guided maintenance for your most important relationship. A professional counselor provides tools and insights to help couples navigate challenges, resolve conflict, deepen their connection, and tackle those tough issues that often get swept under the rug. Whether it's communication breakdowns, intimacy concerns, or big life transitions, counselling can be a game-changer.

But what about the elephant in the room: "Why should we pay someone to do what we can sort out ourselves?" If that's true, then you're all good. However, most of us bring emotional baggage, patterns,

and assumptions into our relationships. A counsellor helps unpack these with curiosity and compassion, offering fresh perspectives that partners often can't see in the heat of conflict. This is the emotional payoff: a stronger connection, greater understanding, and renewed partnership. Imagine walking into a tough conversation and emerging feeling closer rather than further apart. That's the magic of counselling.

Now for the financial side. While the upfront cost might make some couples hesitate, consider this: the average wedding in Australia costs upwards of \$30,000. Couples readily spend on florists, photographers, and gourmet cupcakes, yet balk at investing in the skills and insights to sustain their relationship for decades. Counselling isn't a cost—it's an investment. An investment that can save you years of resentment, emotional distance, or, let's face it, a costly separation. In Australia, the accumulated costs of divorce, including

filing, mediation, legal representation, and court, can reach between \$50,000 and \$100,000 per party.

Of course, there's a stigma. Some people think seeking help signals failure or weakness. In reality, it's quite the opposite - it's functional, responsible and displays emotional maturity and intelligence. Modern couples are ditching the outdated belief that love should be effortless and instead embracing the idea that great relationships require effort, attention, and sometimes, outside expertise.

So, what can you expect? Counselling sessions are tailored to your unique dynamics. You'll learn how to communicate effectively, resolve conflict constructively, and even rediscover the spark that brought you together. Along the way, you'll confront unhelpful narratives (yes, even the "we never fight, so we're fine" myth) and replace them with healthier, more empowering ones.

In short, relationship counselling isn't about "fixing" your partner or ticking boxes. It's about co-creating a relationship that feels fulfilling, intentional, and resilient. It's about being in harmony and contentment with your significant other. Whether you're in a rocky patch or simply want to future-proof your love, it's worth every cent.

Because let's face it: love is the ultimate flat-pack furniture project. And sometimes, you need a manual.

Words: **Scout Smith-O'Leary**
Scout is a Relationship Therapist providing counselling to couples & individuals. Based in Manly. Telehealth available. Visit thelovescout.com or call **0410 030 463** to book a session.

Lifeline Northern Beaches

Connecting our local community: Meet the Lifeline Northern Beaches Volunteers



Volunteer crisis supporter Will answers one of Lifeline's many crisis calls

At Lifeline Northern Beaches, volunteers are an essential part of our organisation. Their time, dedication, and commitment make it possible for us to provide crisis support and suicide prevention services to our community.

Among the more than 640 remarkable individuals who volunteer with us is Will, a Crisis Line Supporter, whose story highlights the important role our volunteers play in our community.

Meet Will, Volunteer Crisis Line Supporter at Lifeline Northern Beaches

"I first came across Lifeline Northern Beaches through their "Accidental Counsellor" course which I attended with my running club. Curiosity led me to their Crisis Supporter training. I'd been searching for a cause to volunteer for, and this felt like the right fit. The training was thorough and

supportive, and now, at stage 3, I am taking calls and connecting with people in need.

"My connection to Lifeline is quite personal. At just 18, I lost my first friend from school to suicide. Over the years, I've lost five more friends. It's something I've always been confused about, often wondering how someone's life could spiral to that point.

"The Crisis Support training at Lifeline Northern Beaches opened my eyes. It taught me how easily life can unravel - whether finances, health, family...things can fall apart so fast. There are many paths to crisis, and when isolation takes hold, suicide can feel like the only way out. It's heartbreaking, but it's made me determined to help others before they reach that tipping point.

"I'll never forget the first time I picked up the phone, I was so nervous. You're talking to someone in a delicate state,

and it's a huge responsibility. But then I reminded myself: I'm just a human helping another human.

"What I've learned is that you can help someone by simply being present - sitting with them in their discomfort, pain, or sorrow. Active listening, without judgment or prejudice, makes a world of difference. It's incredible hearing the shift in someone's voice as they move from distress to calm.

Sometimes, all someone needs is to feel heard, and that's what we're here for."

Join the Lifeline Northern Beaches Volunteer Team in 2025

Volunteers like Will are the heart of Lifeline Northern Beaches, and we're always looking for more people to join our community. Whether it's supporting our retail stores, lending a hand at book fairs or events, or becoming a trained Crisis Line Supporter, there are many ways to get involved.

Volunteering at Lifeline Northern Beaches is about more than just giving your time - it's about fostering community connection, having fun with a supportive team, and knowing you're making a real difference.

If you're ready to make an impact and support local suicide prevention and crisis support services, we'd love to hear from you. Contact us at admin@lifeline.org.au

That's a wrap, Beaches

Thanks 2024, it's been rad

As the end-of-year exhaustion kicks in, and we succumb to last-min Chrissie shopping-panic (was that a slab of Bucketty's cold ones, or a soap-on-a-rope for Uncle Frank?!), and despite existing local challenges (*insert quib about Council's impending rate rises), with economic uncertainty and global tribalism on the rise, there is still much to celebrate and for which to be thankful for us lucky locals living on the Beaches.

So, as we lay 2024 down to rest, here are 10 tales and feel-good news stories of good Beaches' people doing great things for our community to bring in the new year.

1. Centennial celebrations: We celebrated lots of centuries this year, marking 100 years of a richer, safer, and more vibrant community. Queensie SLSC, Royal Far West, Manly Art Gallery and Museum, Manly Warringah Pittwater Historical Society, and Dee Why Furies. Happy Birthday!

IG @goqueensie @royalfarwest @magamns

2. Surf's saviours: The thankless and tireless dedication of our lifeguards and surf-life-saving volunteers is unsurpassed. This year we've seen so many lives saved in heroic and dangerous rescues. We see you; thank you!

3. Home grown surfing glory: In May, our very own Jordy Lawler claimed his first Challenger Series victory in North Narra, in the GWM Sydney Surf Pro, a key event in the World Surf League; we couldn't be prouder.

IG @jordylawler @wsl

4. Good business, unique experiences: Small biz is the lifeblood of our Beaches' economy. Some gem experiences this year, including Manly's Open Air Cinema under the stars, and Cedar & Salt Saunas, post refreshing winter dips.

IG @manlyopenaircinema @cedar.and.salt.saunas

5. Narrabeen's New Nest: Northern Beaches Women's Shelter (NBWS) opened Narrabeen House, a beautiful temporary housing for up to 90 women in crisis, in July. These fully furnished one-bedroom units empower women transitioning to stable, independent living, within a caring community. IG @nbws_org



NBWS' new Narrabeen House for women in crisis

6. Parisian pride: Who could forget cheering with gusto our 19 local legends representing Australia at the Paris Olympic and Paralympic games on the world stage.

7. Beaches Youth Hub rebrands and relaunches: In September, Beaches Youth Hub, underpinned by Burdekin, rebranded and relaunched its multi-purpose, multi-service safe space that supports young people with an array of mental health services. If you don't know where to even start, start with Beaches Youth Hub. They're there to help. IG @beachesyouthhub

8. Coffee for a cause: Roland at EMU PARADE kept serving up the free coffees and cleaning up our beaches. His idea is simple: pick up the plastic and be rewarded with a free flatty-white. Genius. IG @ep.cleanup

9. Engage launches more engaged parents: Jo from Engage Northern Beaches gave parents and carers an early Christmas gift in November: a free website packed with tips and tricks for kids' experiences. What once was a simple socials-following has now transformed into a full-blown, easy-to-navigate, (and free) website for Beaches' carers. Thanks for taking the mental load, Engage! IG @engage_northern_beaches

10. Playful places pop up: This year also delivered the goods with the opening of three new and improved open spaces. These included the new mini-Ninja Warrior circuit (Fairlight), the renamed and improved Lynne Czinner Park (Warriewood), and more recently, the new Freshie Playground. IG @beachescouncil

Thanks 2024. As they say, may your summer days be merry and bright. Cheers to 2025.

Words: Georgia Ryburn



Nick Beverley, XL Hawkesbury River Flathead (released)

Fishing

What's Biting, Clint?

How lucky are we to live in the place we do. This is a statement not a question. I've fished from our beaches, rock ledges, offshore reefs, harbours, and estuaries alike for most of my life, enjoying everything those beautiful places have to offer. To change it up, I did something out of the box recently, and took a trip that pulled back the curtain on the vast extent of our waterways and what they connect to.

I launched my boat at Bayview boat ramp like I've done hundreds of times, but this time I wasn't chasing Pittwater Kings, Flathead or Whiting. I was heading way up-river, west of the M1 bridge at Brooklyn, to meet up with a houseboat with four enthusiastic fisho mates. We were chasing Jewfish, Mud Crabs and XL Flathead. It was brand new territory for me, and I felt that excited anticipation again, like I did when I was a youngster.

Knowing nothing about the area, we had to use our combined experience to suss out where the fish might be holding. We found reef edges, sand flats, eddies and drop offs. We fished with mixed results initially, landing some quality Bream, Flathead and Whiting on live nippers. As the search continued, we mixed up locations, focusing on tide changes around the bridges until we found some smaller Jewfish.

It wasn't just about catching the fish - it was the different experience, learning something new and enjoying those unique moments with a few Northern Beaches legends. With summer now in full swing, I recommend you look further afield and try something new - you never know what you'll find.

Words: Clint Harwood IG @aussiecavemanclint



Ravi and Muzz, best new old mates in town

Before the Dip

Mates for Life

G'day, I'm Ravi. Mr Tawny asked me to jot down a few thoughts on making friends as an adult. I'm a 48-year-old man and can confirm - it's not easy making new, old friends.

New friends happen easily for kids. One kid, on holidays at the pool, sees another kid do a single knee tuck bomb into the pool making a huge splash. He follows with his own double knee bomb technique, equally impressive splash, both kids are friends for the remainder of their holiday. Simple.

Making new friends when you're older takes work. I'm not sure why. Considering the World Happiness Report regards friendships as an integral part of sustained happiness I think it's an important thing to discuss.

My best mate growing up died as a result of a mountain climbing fall when we were both 27. Ben's passing left a big hole in my life that I didn't know existed until I met Muzza...Muzz and I were paired together as roommates at a weekend seminar in Melbourne in 2016. We bonded over a shared love for the tv show Deadliest Catch and the giddy excitement one has on an extremely rare trip away from their young family. We were both kids doing bombs into the pool again.

Ever since, Muzz and I have caught up weekly to discuss every aspect of our lives, turning those conversations into our podcast Before the Dip. We'd love you to have a listen. As huge fans of The Tawny we both hope to contribute to this column and further build out what we see as the development of great friendships.

Words: Ravi Rudner, Director of Village Chiropractic
Listen to the **Before the Dip** podcast online and follow Ravi and Muzz on socials @beforethedip

Time to visit different climbs

Plants are much like people...some like to stand strong, alone and proud. Others like something (or someone) to crawl all over.



1. Dusky Coral Pea

Climbing plants do a wonderful job of disguising ugly structures or shielding you from the gaze of over attentive neighbours.

The horticultural industry has provided us with a limited range of climbers such as star jasmine, golden trumpet vine, white potato creeper and wisteria. These plants are tediously ubiquitous in backyards, coast to coast, across Australia. The trouble is, none of them are native to this land and, just like cuckoos, they've pushed our endemic species right out of the "nest".

If you live in Sydney sandstone country, we have some spectacular native climbing plants that are important components of our local eco system. They're also a real joy to behold. Here's a quick glimpse of a few which deserve to be seen more.

All are easy to grow and belong to the Northern Beaches. You can purchase them locally at an indigenous plant nursery such as Indigo (www.indigonursery.com.au)

1. Dusky Coral Pea (*Kennedia Rubicunda*): A very hardy plant and vigorous climber. Aborigines used the vine as string and sucked nectar from the flowers.



2. Old Man's Beard

2. Old Man's Beard (*Clematis Aristata*): Has a mass of white flowers in Spring. Indigenous people roasted and ate its roots.



3. Happy Wanderer

3. Happy Wanderer (*Hardenbergia Violacea*): A gorgeous twiner with rich purple flowers. A sweet tea can be made from boiling its leaves.



4. Golden Guinea Flower

4. Golden Guinea Flower (*Hibbertia Scandens*): An attractive dense climber which has succulent orange seeds that are much loved by birds.



5. Wonga Wonga Vine

5. Wonga Wonga Vine (*Pandorea Pandorana*): Has amazing cascades of white and pink flowers in Spring. Used for binding and shelter building by First Nations people.

These beauties can be your first step in creating a vibrant natural garden that's guaranteed to get your sap rising. Stick some in your patch of dirt and let me know how you grow!

Words: **Mal Fisher**

Deep Creek Reserve: The start line for adventure

This multi-use reserve serves as a starting point for many adventures, from mountain biking to hiking and water sports. As we entered the reserve, we followed a rough gravel trail running parallel to Deep Creek. Trucks and vans lined the water's edge, while people unloaded mountain bikes or drifted down the creek on paddleboards or kayaks.

The gravel road ends at an open reserve that doubles as a giant off-leash dog area, with a towering sandstone wall barricading the north-eastern side. Beyond the sandstone wall lies a mountain biker's haven: the Mt Narra mountain biking trail, an extensive network of natural sandstone single tracks.

We were bike-less that day, so we chose the Deep Creek trail loop. Starting at the open reserve, it crosses a short wooden boardwalk before looping back to form a solid five-and-a-half-kilometre route. But before venturing further afield, we explored the far side of the reserve, where a hidden waterfall lies nestled.

On the day we visited, it stood bone dry under the scorching sun, though it transforms into a rushing cascade after heavy rains. From the vantage point of the waterfall, it's astonishing to think we're less than a kilometre from the bustling Wakehurst Parkway - so secluded within the bushland.

Continuing along the short, rocky track beside the creek, we crossed a large metal bridge connecting the trail to the opposite bank. From the top of the bridge, there's a beautiful view down the creek, shaded by mangroves, eucalypts, ferns, and shrubs, despite the eyesore of a water valve that runs through the reserve.

Just beyond the bridge, the trail splits in two, offering the choice of starting with the fire trail or the rough, rocky path along the river's edge. We chose the river's edge, winding through dense shrubbery that opened to patches of rain-forest, where towering palms and knotted roots crowded the path. Mallards drifted down the creek, basking in sunlit patches, while vibrant black-and-orange butterflies fluttered ahead of us, occasionally pausing to pollinate.

Though we passed a few groups, the trail remained quiet despite being shared by mountain bikers and hikers, as we enjoyed



Deep Creek, home to many a Wakehurst secret

the cacophony of birdsong, high in the trees. Making our way back to the open reserve, we pass more vans and bikers gathering along the path, unloading their gear and gearing up for adventure - yet another hidden gem in the Northern Beaches, ready to be explored.

Did you know...

Camping at Deep Creek Reserve dates back to 1927, when Warringah Council allowed it despite most of the land being privately owned at the time. The area quickly became a popular camping spot, gaining even more traction when the land was sold to Warringah Council in 1957. Although camping is no longer permitted, archives reveal the reserve hosted a variety of groups over the years, including German seamen brought by the German Labour Front (DAF), 200 members of the Methodist Order of Knights, other religious organisations, and individual families.

How to get here

If you're driving, look for a turn-off from Wakehurst Parkway, just before or after the bridge over Deep Creek on the northern side of Narrabeen Lake. The turn-off isn't well-marked, but if you're coming from the Narrabeen side, it's about a kilometre west of Bilarong Reserve. If you're already on the Narrabeen Lake trail, keep an eye out for an underpass beneath the Deep Creek bridge on Wakehurst Parkway. This will lead you under the bridge and into the parking lot at Deep Creek Reserve - just follow the road down to the open reserve.

Words: **Rebecca Burton**

Have a great spot you think should be featured?
Email mail@thetownyfrogmouth.com.au



Choosing a positive perspective is what these books are about

Tawny's Bathtub Bookclub

Never too old

Much loved American holistic physician and medical activist, **Gladys McGarey**, died late last year at age 103. Her book **The Well-Lived Life: A 102-Year-Old Doctor's Six Secrets to Health And Happiness At Every Age** is the most beautiful and practical book on this subject you're ever likely to read. Don't wait till you're old to read it – it's a book for all ages.

It shares the secrets that provide something of a roadmap to realise the essence of Leonardo da Vinci's observation "As a well-spent day brings happy sleep, so a life well spent brings a happy death."

Dr Gladys retired at 86 but continued to offer telephone consultations although no longer having a licence to practise. Her attitude was, "Nobody told me I had to stop talking." At 100, she delivered a TedX Talk on holistic medicine.

Dr Gladys believed that too many people feed into unnecessary stress. The happiest and healthiest people can let go of things or experiences that no longer serve them. Dr Gladys

says the habit that brought her health and happiness throughout the years was the ability to build things anew, whether it's a relationship, career path or project.

Changing your perspective – it's a theme that came through in these next two books too.

Northern Beaches resident **Trish Sara**, has written her first book, **Old Age Doesn't Have to Suck Entirely** at 68 years of age. Her book comes with a warning, "Rated MW for Mature Women, includes strong language, sex references and violence alluded to." This humour made me warm to Trish immediately.

It's a comedic self-help book for people brave enough to question some of their beliefs and open to using the helpful tips and tricks Trish Sara shares, many based on her years counselling mature women. I loved Ben Weir's illustrations. They make many of Trish's points with a gleeful humour.

The book is targeted to women over 60 but there's plenty that applies to people

of all ages, especially the need to consider how a change of perspective can make all the difference to your outlook, choices and relationships.

Mrs Winterbottom takes a Gap Year by **Joanna Nell**, another Northern Beaches legend, is a story about a married couple, both doctors, who have spent their careers working together in a small practice in a dull sounding English village and retired together without discussing how they wanted to spend their retirement. Alan becomes an organic gardening obsessive, and Heather dreams of making up for all the experiences she never had as a young woman.

The dialogue is crisp and fresh, Heather's exasperation and frustration with Alan is something many long-wed women will identify with. I can't reveal any spoilers, you'll have to read it to see if Heather and Alan end up another grey divorce statistic or remain true to their "till death do us part" vows.

A bonus for anyone unfamiliar with Homer's *The Odyssey* (guilty) is that you'll know quite a bit about it by the time you've finished reading this book. *The Odyssey* plays a significant role in how things pan out for Alan and Heather.

Where to buy

Local is always best, Berkelouw Books Balgowlah, Humphreys on The Corso, Manly, and Harry Hartog at Warringah Mall for *The Well-Lived Life* and *Mrs Winterbottom* and on Amazon for *Old Age* although it's likely to be available at select bookshops on the Northern Beaches.

Words: **Paige Turner**



Oona commits to fact finding journalism

Eat & Drink

The OonaVerse: Acai Challenge

Hi, my name is Oona. I'm 10 years old and I love acai. It's healthier than ice cream and has fun toppings. I was first introduced to acai when my mum saw Oakberry had opened in Manly and was interested to try this out. From then on, we have fallen in love with acai and have fallen out of love with ice cream.

Knowing how much I love acai, Tawny challenged me to explore the OonaVerse, asking me to spend two weeks trying out acai shops on the Northern Beaches and to report back on my OonaVerse findings so Tawny readers get the inside scoop this summer. The past fortnight has been no picnic. It's been tough, judging and comparing all the acai candidates, and staying focused on objective journalism.

My judging criteria was out of 10 for five categories: Hospitality, Choice of Toppings, Thickness, Value and Flavour. My acai candidates: Oakberry, Yo-Chi, Blessed Bowls and Flannerys. Ready for the results?

The winner of the first ever OonaVerse challenge is **Blessed Bowls**. Exceptional hospitality with happy and bubbly staff. Excellent choice of toppings - even with Bischoff and Nutella as options. Superb thickness and flavour. Great value. If you're looking for a healthy ice cream substitute, Blessed Bowls is my pick.

Yo-Chi was a close second, the most extensive range of toppings. Oakberry and Flannerys were both very good too. It's a very competitive acai market, which is what I like most.

Words: **Oona Du Vernet**



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PHOTO OF THE MONTH

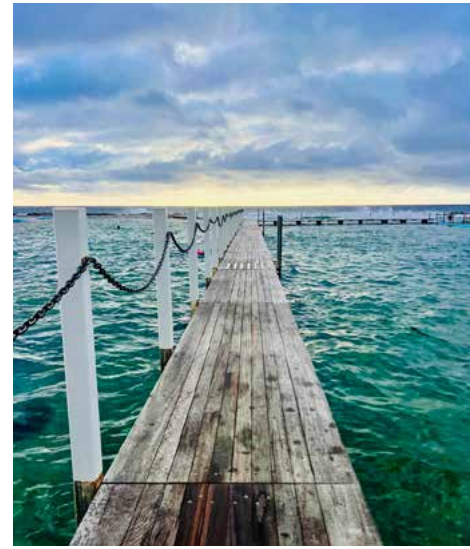
Subject North Head magpie happy hour
Photographer Jens Ward



Subject Chalk up a 2024 Santa perfect 10
Location The North Steyne Highway



Subject Winter Vincent's Lifeline Classic flair
Photographer Bernadette Johnson @bernadette2097



Subject Narrabeen Rockpool early morning swim
Location Tania Barra-Shaw Harmelink



Subject Eyes front!
Photographer Ruth Charnell



Subject Forty Baskets summer haven
Photographer Liz Cooper



Subject Australia Day
Photographer Rob Toshack



Subject Dragon eats dragon
Photographer Bruce Williams



Subject Christmas Tree Topper
Photographer Murray Fraser @sproutdaily



1. How many Trbojevic brothers played 1st grade for the Manly Sea Eagles this year?
2. Approximately how long is the Spit to Manly coastal walk? 5km, 10km, or 20km?
3. 4 Pines Brewery has 3 locations on the Northern Beaches: Brookvale, Manly, and which other suburb?
4. Warringah Mall featured in which Aussie movie from the 80s: BMX Bandits, Crocodile Dundee, or Young Einstein?
5. Which Northern Beaches school has an Aussie Rules field in its grounds right next to Pittwater Road?
6. A successful sitcom from the late 90s/early 2000s was Everybody Loves WHO?
7. What kind of nut is used in Nutella?
8. Has any astronaut walked on the moon twice in separate missions?
9. When referring to the Wiggles, what type of animal was Dorothy?
10. From which Australian state does Cascade beer hail from?
11. Yes or No - Does New Zealand observe day light savings time?
12. Which animal is featured on the flag of California?
13. Which type of cheese is used in a Caprese Salad?
14. Was the Anzac Bridge opened in the 1990s or 2000s?
15. Which country has both the highest percentage of vegetarians and total number of vegetarians on the planet?
16. "Da" and "Nyet" are "Yes" and "No" in which language?
17. In terms of land area, which Australian state capital city has the largest commercial airport?
18. Which of the following is the least magnetic? Iron, Magnesium, or Nickel?
19. Which Taylor Swift album was named after the year she was born?
20. How many letters are on the bottom row of a QWERTY keyboard?

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Sudoku Medium difficulty

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

Rumour has it these are December's trivia answers

1. Felons
2. Shelly Beach
3. Manly Golf Club
4. 80km
5. Bilgola
6. Spinach
7. Sturm
8. Italian
9. Bean
10. Elvis Presley
11. The Whopper
12. Cycling
13. Cucumber
14. George Costanza
15. Chickpeas
16. Switzerland
17. Japan
18. The Sahara Desert
19. Georgia
20. Macbeth

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Star Signs by Krystal Bawl

Capricorn Dec 22 – Jan 20

Only the good die young, meaning you have a long life ahead, so remember to party like a rockstar this birthday.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19

Possible or probable, 2025 will be your best year yet? Possible? Of course! Probable? You be a star; your stars will align.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20

Tock-tick is idle clockwork. Two hands, face it. But your era of TikTok superstardom is now. Get your tok-tik'n

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 19

Shaken not stirred works wonders for a vodka martini, James Bond too. Stop stirring. Start shaking things up.

Taurus Apr 20 – May 21

Get your finances in order immediately by chasing down the inheritance bounty you have owing from Nigeria.

Gemini May 22 – Jun 21

Live and let live has been your life motto forever. Stand strong in these woke times and don't change a thing.

Cancer Jun 22 – Jul 22

Everyone's broke but playing the age card for cheap deals won't work thanks to your incredible skin care regimen.

Leo Jul 23 – Aug 22

Roar louder than ever in 2025 but save the thunder for worthy battles. No point snarling petty scuffles.

Virgo Aug 23 – Sep 23

A new moon is rising, venture out, shed your clothes, dance to your own beat. Just beware CCTV cameras.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 23

January is your S month: Be silly, keep shtum, go surfing, stop stressing, savour sweetness and stop saying sorry.

Scorpio Oct 24 – Nov 22

This month's cosmic intensity will pump endorphins into you at superhero levels. Don't waste them. Unleash!

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 21

You are as close to perfect as a person can be as you kickstart the year, but best lay low. Help everyone else feel better.



Trivia Answers

1. 3.2.10km 3. Newport 4. BMX Bandits
 5. Narrabeen Sports High 6. Raymond 7. Hazelnet
 8. No 9. Dinosaur 10. Tasmania 11. Yes 12. Bear
 13. Mozzarella 14. 1990's (1995) 15. India
 16. Russian 17. Brisbane 18. Magnesium 19. 1989
 20. 7

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

Sudoku Solution

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