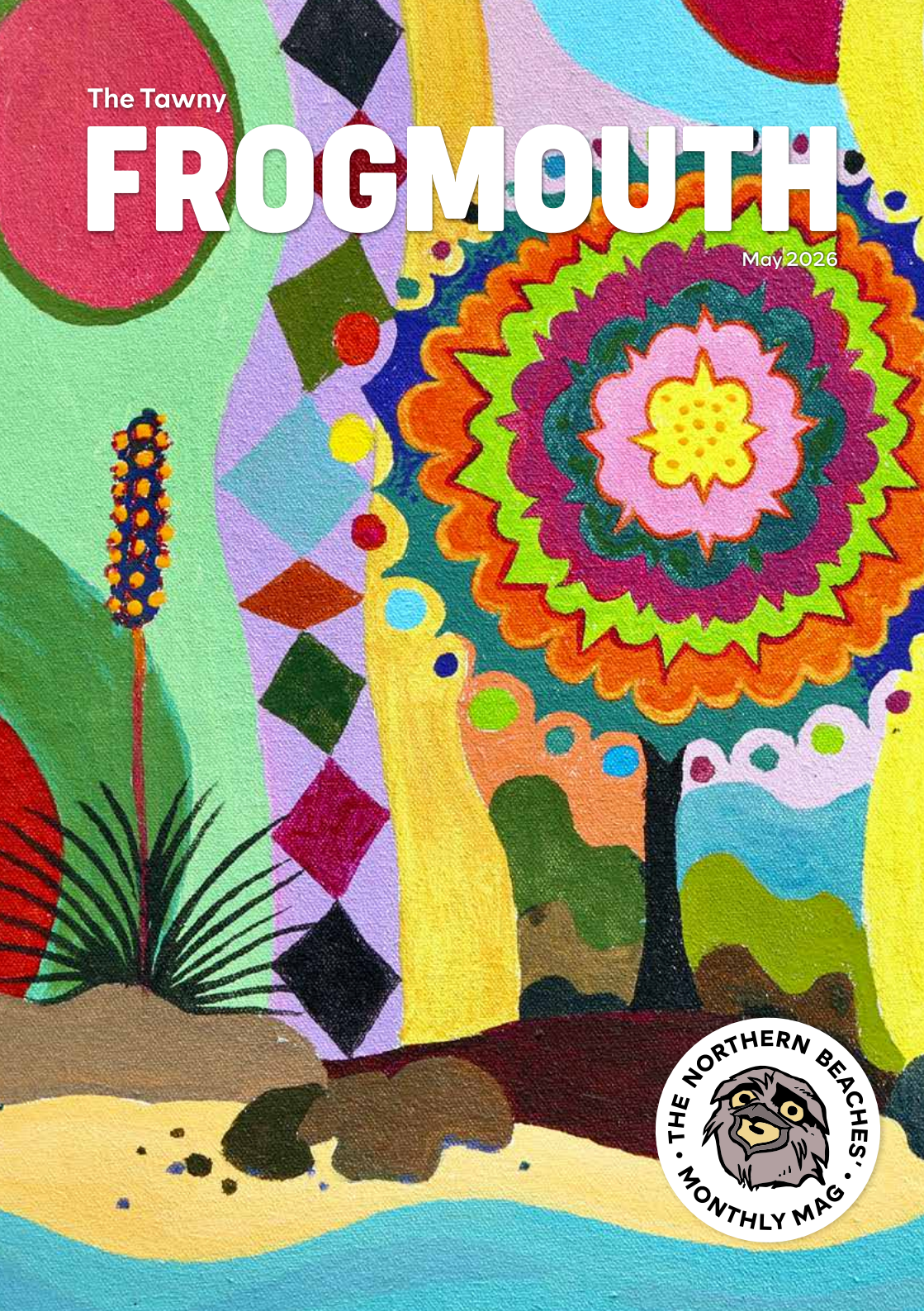


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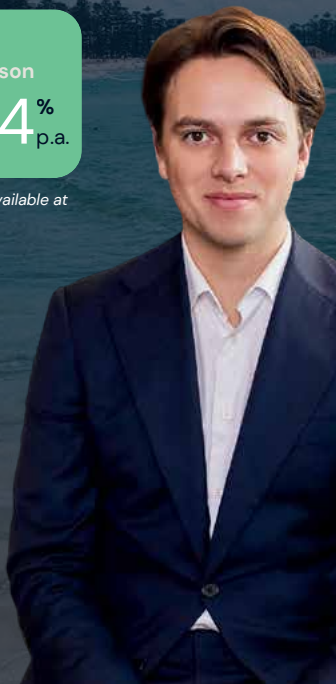
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2023

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For a growing number of Sydney-siders, the dream of trading traffic, noise and relentless pace for a more relaxed coastal lifestyle is no longer hypothetical — it's already happening at Palm Lake Resort Forster Lakes. Just a few hours north of the city on the Mid North Coast, this award-winning over-50s community is redefining what the next chapter can look like, offering a sophisticated blend of design, comfort and low-maintenance luxury.

Inspired by the laid-back elegance of the Florida Keys, Palm Lake Resort Forster Lakes has built its reputation on beautifully considered homes that embrace open-plan living, natural light and effortless indoor-outdoor flow. Yet even among this impressive collection, one design stands apart: the Carrabelle.

At 280.56m² (30.19 squares), the Carrabelle is a two-storey home that feels both expansive and deeply liveable. It offers three bedrooms, three bathrooms, study, master retreat and generous

living spaces, all carefully arranged to support the way over-50s want to live now — and into the future.

The first-floor master suite is a defining feature. More than just a bedroom, it reads like a private retreat, complete with its own adjoining living area, hidden kitchenette, walk-through robe, study nook and ensuite. It's the kind of space that speaks to the luxury of having room to breathe — something many former Sydneysiders quickly come to value once they leave the city behind.

In keeping with Palm Lake Resort Forster Lakes' thoughtful approach to design, an internal elevator comes standard in every two-storey home, including the Carrabelle. Practical, stylish and future-focused, it's one of many inclusions that reflects the resort's commitment to comfort without compromise.

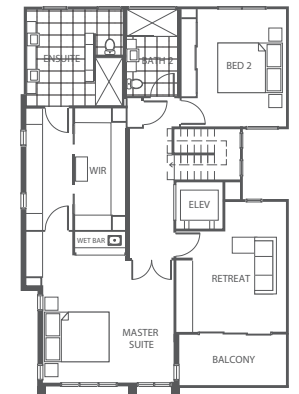
Materiality and finish are equally considered. Hebel Power Wall Panel construction, Express Panel Cemintel cladding and a Colorbond roof

provide strong performance and durability, while interiors elevate the everyday with 2 Pac cabinetry, Caesarstone surfaces, Tasmanian oak feature screens and premium SMEG appliances. Bathrooms feature floor-to-ceiling tiling and frameless shower screens, while plantation shutters add warmth and refinement throughout.

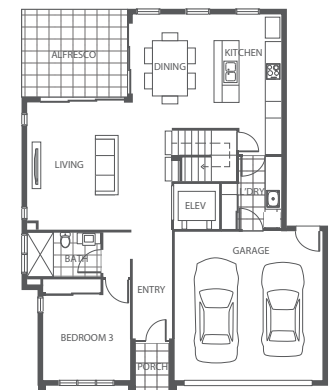
Outside, low-maintenance choices such as Modwood decking, PVC fencing, exposed aggregate driveways and tiled patios ensure homeowners spend less time on upkeep and more time enjoying the lifestyle they moved for.

It's little wonder the Carrabelle was awarded the **2023 Master Builders Association Best Display Home in its category.**

For those who've already swapped Sydney's pace for Forster's calm, Palm Lake Resort Forster Lakes offers something increasingly rare: a home that feels aspirational, practical and entirely in step with this next stage of life. Phone our Sales Information Centre on 1800 577 542 to book your visit or virtual tour.



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G'day Beaches

Hello Autumn, best time of year, with perfect waves, light winds, and footy season kicking off strong.

Thank you David Manuell, bringing Pittwater's Towlers Bay to light for our May cover. Well done Jen Vanstone, Letter of the Month highlighting concerns over a proposed Bayview development. And Anne-Louise Towers wins Photo of the Month as "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun" at the Lifeline Rockpool Tour.

Michael West Media outlines RBA's card surcharge con set to fuel inflation. Bikehero arrives to simplify e-bike rules. And Brendan Ryan turns the taps to uncover how a shower costs \$200 for elders in care.

Meet your councillor, Nick Beugeard. Lawrence Chlebeck explains the shark culling realities that can put everyone at risk. Assistance Dogs Australia tranform lives through puppy power. The Love Scout dares mention the N word. Aaron Kemp helps tradies get their business in the black. VAMOS celebrates two years, let's go! And Gabby Villaba prepares to exhibit her body of work at Curl Curl Creative Space.

Happy Mother's Day!

Liam



The Tawny Frogmouth

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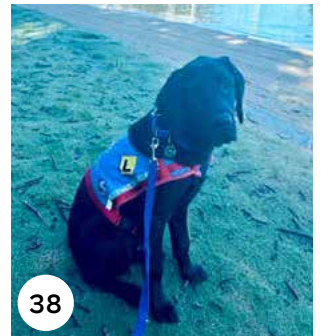
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Acknowledgement of Country

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.

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Peninsula Wash Up

Rockpool Tour powering on

Lifeline Northern Beaches has taken like a fish to water in continuing the **Ocean Rockpool Tour** legacy, the annual Peninsula smile-a-thon which sees participants of all ages and swimming abilities dive in and swim laps at every Beaches rockpool from Palmy to Shelly. This year's event was filled with sun, laughs, community connection, and raised a whopping \$29,568 in the process. The "Celebrity" Kickboard Race saw Tawny's editor leave **Cliffy Lyons**, **Jacqui Scruby**, **Sarah Grattan** and **Mick Harrold** in his South Curly wake, only for Paralympic Gold Medallist superstar **Declan Budd** to leave onlookers certain of jet engines in his legs, blistering the field.



Lifeline Rockpool Tour's final stop Shellybrations

Bowel Cancer Fundraiser

In March we caught up with Fairlight father of three, **Chris Clarke**, a young man who found out in November he had Stage 4 Bowel Cancer and was stoically battling through chemotherapy while also determined to run the Orange Marathon on 15 March. Local filmmaker **Will Spielberg Somerville** has since created a mini documentary to showcase Chris' incredible 42-kilometre mission, and boundless efforts to raise funds and bring awareness to Bowel Cancer more broadly. **7th Day Brewery** will host the premiere screening and fundraising party on **Thursday 21 May**. Follow [@thetawnyfrogmouth](#) on Instagram for all details.

National Sorry Day

The Manly Warringah Pittwater **Aboriginal Support Group** invites everyone to mark **National Sorry Day** on **Sunday 24 May** at **Memorial Hall Mona Vale** (1 Park St Mona Vale). Starting at 12:30pm, there will be a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony with didgeridoo and clap sticks playing, followed by a silent walk to remember the Stolen Generations before everyone joins inside Memorial Hall for afternoon tea, kangaroo rissoles, sausages, damper and lots more. There will be a reading from *Aunty Nancy's Book of Poems*. **Aleta Wassell** will talk through what Sorry Day is all about. The Aboriginal Dancing Group will perform. Enjoy weaving, see amazing Aboriginal Artefacts, and paint Boomerangs. This is a free community event and if you can bring something to share for supper it would be greatly appreciated. For all details, call **0419 219 770** and visit [asgmp.net](#)

East Coast Invitational

It's that magic time of year where warm water, offshore breeze, and corduroy lines of pumping swell transform east coast surfers into ravenous tube hounds. Pitted in the thick of this annual wonder is the **East Coast Invitational**, taking place Saturday 16 May at North Narrabeen. The best of the best Boardriders Clubs – including North Narrabeen, Snapper Rocks, Avoca, North Steyne, Avalon, Dee Why and many more – will converge to shred it out for titular supremacy and **\$25k in cash and prizes**, all thanks to the **Mona Vale Hotel**. Athletes hit the water at 8am. Action all day. After party and presentations at The Mona (Watu) from 5pm.

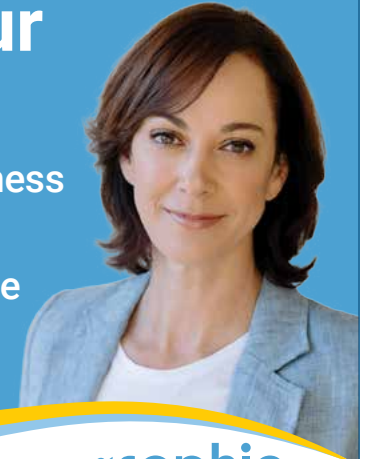
April Fools' Day Comedy Gold

Lying dormant for many years, 2026 saw April Fools' Day jokes surging back into top form. It all started with a BREAKING Press Release atop Tawny's desk: "Australian government to build 22 new oil refineries and lift the ban on nuclear energy immediately. Government also to halve taxes across the economy and reduce migrant intake," says @AlboMP - For Immediate Release. Canberra, April 1. Got him, yes! This was soon followed by huge news out of Manly Marlins HQ that Wallabies legend Michael Hooper was returning to The Village Green for the 2026 season! Before Avalon Beach RSL got in on the act via social media, "Hurry! California Lords of Punk Rock, Sublime, are throwing an impromptu show on Good Friday! BOOK NOW!" The phones at Av Rissolle haven't rung so hot since Bryan Brown was accused of starting Covid Lockdown 2.0. Well played all.

Image: Anne-Louise Towers - IG@aitakesflight

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Letters to The Tawny

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Bayview Opal

I am a resident of Annam Road (aka "Bayview-Without-The-View") and, like many of my neighbours, am deeply concerned about the proposed Opal Healthcare Bayview development. Our street has always been known for its leafy, bushland feel and low-density homes. It is a quiet residential neighbourhood where families and retirees have chosen to live because of its peaceful character. Now we are being told that a 177-bed aged care facility with more than 80 staff and 24-hour operations may be built in the middle of this same street.

The scale of the proposal is completely out of proportion with the surrounding area and will bring constant traffic, noise, lighting and acute activity into a quiet residential environment. There are also serious concerns about whether local infrastructure (particularly roads and sewage systems) can cope with a development of this size. Questions around road safety and environmental impacts remain unanswered by the developer and NSW Planning. Adding to the unease, Opal Healthcare was recently in the news for introducing fees reportedly approaching \$10,000 a year for services such as hot breakfasts and televisions, raising concerns that profit takes priority – even over their own residents.

If this is the future of local "planning", don't be surprised if your street is next.

Jen Vanstone, Bayview

Protecting Long Reef: Why Dogs Must Stay Off the Beach

Long Reef is not simply a picturesque stretch of sand. It is one of the most environmentally significant coastal headlands in NSW, recognised for its ecological and cultural heritage. However, despite clear regulations, there is an increasing number of people allowing their dogs to roam off leash, placing vulnerable wildlife at risk.

Each year, myriad shorebirds, such as oystercatchers, plovers, and terns nest on beaches along Australia's coastline. They lay their eggs in shallow scrapes in the sand, almost invisible to the casual beach walker. Spring and summer mark their breeding season, precisely when beaches are most heavily used by people and their pets. Even the most well-meaning and nature loving dog owners may not realise that a single unleashed dog running across the Long Reef sand can destroy eggs, scatter chicks, or even force adult birds to abandon their nests.

Long Reef Aquatic Reserve is the oldest in NSW, established in 1980 to conserve seashore plants, animals, and habitats. The headland and adjoining foreshore are recognised as a Wildlife Protection Area, supporting more than 140 bird species, including several threatened species, such as Lewin's Rail, Little Penguins, Ospreys, and Sooty Oystercatchers.

Off-lead dogs are widely documented as a major cause of breeding failure. They chase adult birds from nests, trample eggs, kill chicks, and leave scent trails that attract other predators, including gulls, ravens, cats, and rats. Free-roaming dogs and breeding shorebirds are entirely incompatible.

If we value Long Reef's biodiversity and the ongoing work of Reefcare volunteers and

Council in restoring habitats and removing invasive species, then compliance with regulations is the least we can offer. Keeping dogs off the beach is not anti-dog; it is pro-wildlife, pro-heritage and pro-community. We are fortunate to live beside such a remarkable environment. Let us ensure that future generations inherit a beautiful view AND a thriving ecosystem.

William Langley

Re: Retirement peninsula

Brendan Ryan is to be applauded for establishing Entitlementate, helping people find and understand their entitlements, but there needs to be some context to bemoaning the change in the Beaches' demographics.

It wasn't always the case, but the last 15 years has seen demand increase for a beachside lifestyle that allows access to the city via a glorious 20-minute ferry ride. It's not only Boomers (like me), but also professional couples, returning expats and indeed immigrants who have the added benefit of stronger currencies.

It's been repeated in the beachside suburbs in the East and the Shire. Gentrification of what was once the solid working-class inner-city suburbs has been going on for 50 years. As Brendan points out it is not just the cost of housing – though it is the most significant factor – but also the cost of childcare, insurance, transport etc. Government has also contributed with a plethora of taxation policies that sees demand outstrip supply enabling a few at the expense of many.

Unfortunately, the harsh reality is being born in a particular postcode does not grant you land rights in perpetuity.

Mike Kenneally, Manly

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Re: Bull sharks (Mar '26)

I found Mike Psillakis' article both well considered and well written. Timely as well given that daily alarms for shark sightings on local beaches are still ongoing. I was particularly impressed by Mike's even and balanced view. Well done.

Ian Donato

Shark nets

I would like to point out the attack on Mercury Psillakis occurred when shark nets were still in place, before they were removed for the winter. Proof positive they don't work, rather achieve the opposite.

Peter Burns

Jump rock solution

Percy Pelican wrote in March of the out-of-town kids damaging property and assaulting people in the Little Manly, Collins Flat, and East and West Esplanade areas. The obvious solution is for Manly Police to do their job. They should increase the number and staffing of patrols so it will no longer be pleasant for these people to carry out these activities. It won't be easy to police Collins Flat, but is the only way to get rid of the hooligans.

Regarding Jump Rock, extending the fencing in the area over the years has not stopped the jumpers getting through to the rock face. The solution lies in changing the way the jumpers exit the water after jumping. At present, they can just swim 5m to a convenient set of steps carved into the rocks by the Chistian Brothers years ago. Council or Maritime could block off this exit point by putting some form of unpleasant barrier in place. The only option then for the jumpers would be to swim 100m to Collins Beach and walk back in bare feet along a gravelly track. Some would do it, but it would not be such

a fun event for most of the participants, who as Westies, are probably not strong swimmers. As far as I am aware, all other exit points require a tough climb over steep rocks covered with oysters.

Barrenjoey Boy

Re: Ian Newport, Gaza

I was impressed to read Ian's letter as he gave all the facts about the war in Gaza without the emotional hysteria that photos in the media stir up. War is never nice, but Israel is continually being targeted by rebels in surrounding countries. Nobody seems to care about that. Why isn't there more outrage at countries who allow terrorist groups and their ongoing drone and missile attacks? Israel is a democracy who allow gay people and any religion to thrive yet that does not happen in a vast majority of surrounding countries. I know what I would want if my country was attacked as Israel was and I would not be sorry for fighting back to protect the freedoms we have here in Australia.

Robyn, Dee Why

Re: Ian Newport, Gaza

What a fine letter in the April Tawny, Liam. No doubt it will draw criticism from many of your readers but for me, it was on point, factual and well written.

I might add that Hamas has not surrendered and has 3 different factions fighting for control. The Palestinian people continue to suffer, not because of Israel but because of the government they elected, aided and abetted

Some say you reap what you sow. Enough is enough and Hamas has to be taken out. Until this happens, civilian casualties will continue to mount up. There can be no

Board of Peace plan whilst Hamas refuses to lay down their arms.

The "genocide" in Gaza is due entirely to Hamas not complying with the ceasefire and has shown no intention to do so. And this constant referral to the "genocide" of the Gazan people is a nonsense. It is an ongoing war. Hamas is the problem and is imposing death on its own people.

John Partridge

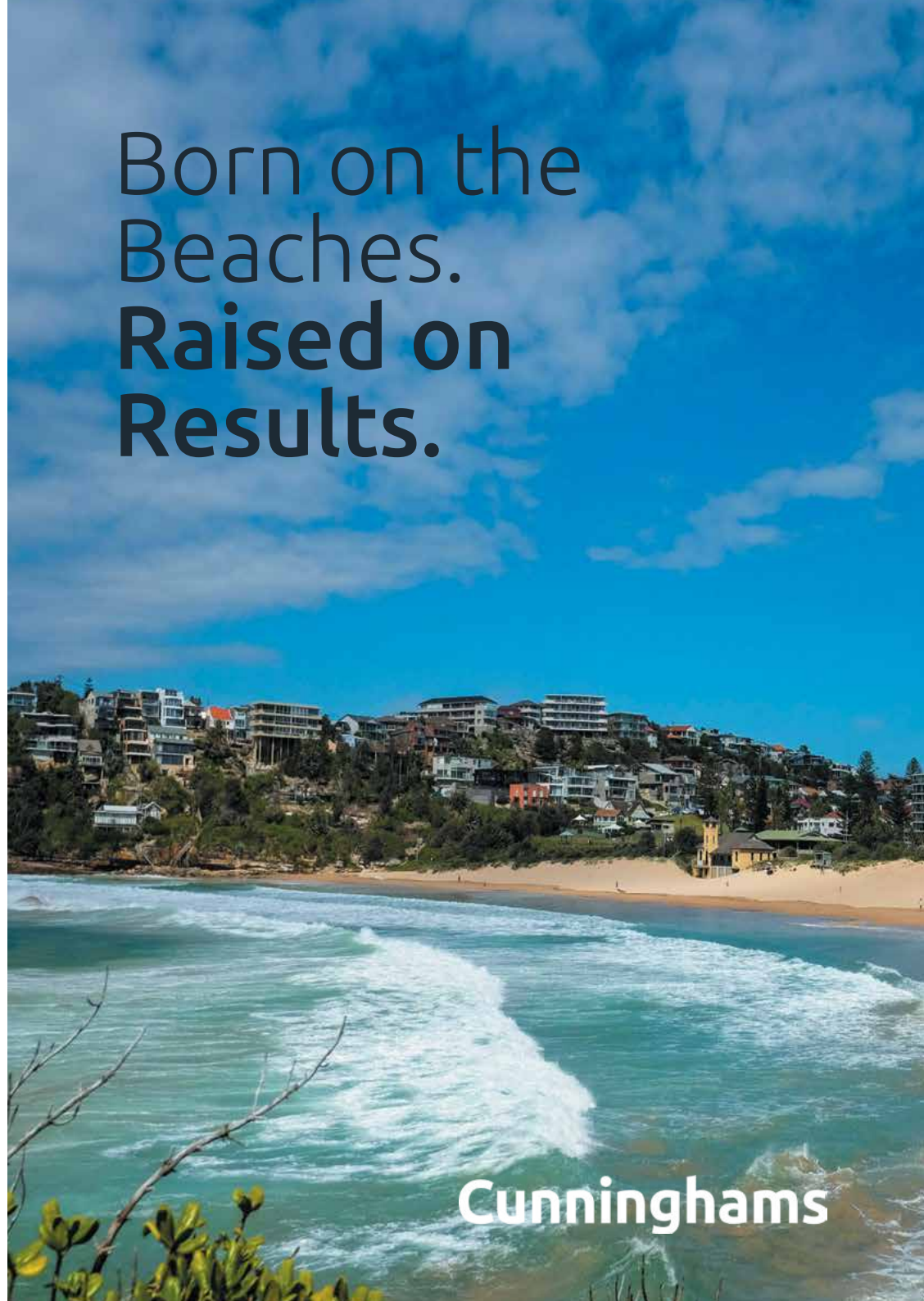
Squatters & Israel

Dear Tawny, I have just returned to Sydney and had the pleasure of reading the Frogmouths for both March and April and have two responses to your correspondents.

First, to empathise with John White of Balgowlah (March letters) regarding squatters in the Manly beach shelters. I wrote to Council in January about the problem and got this cop-out response: "Council is aware of this matter and working with local housing and homelessness services to find a sustainable housing solution". And I was advised to contact police if I felt threatened! Council has presumably put beach shelter complaints in the "too hard" basket because the squatters don't want alternative accommodation. It seems that Council wardens are more interested in enforcing parking regulations than in enforcing beach shelter use.

Second to Ian of Newport (April letters), who is clearly one of the Israel-can-do-no-wrong-brigade. I try to be objective about Israel, but like many Australians I see today's Israel as a rogue state run by an alleged fraudster/war criminal and his cronies. Killing 70,000 people in Gaza, mostly civilians, in response to the killing of 1,200 Israelis is hardly pro-

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portionate self-defence. Then there are the settler attacks on Palestinians to steal their West Bank land – conducted under the benign eye of the police and IDF, the practice of apartheid in Israel's justice system, the ongoing genocide in Gaza, and destruction of civilian infrastructure in Lebanon and Iran. It seems that Israel has lost its way under the current regime, to the dismay of many Israelis. I am not anti-Israel or antisemitic, I have lived on a kibbutz and visited Israel several times, but I cannot in conscience support the way that modern Israel is behaving. Australian Jews should be calling out Israel rather than trying to justify its unacceptable behaviour.

C. Williams, Manly

Re: Ian Newport, Gaza

Some correspondents argue that the problems, and in Israel's view, the response to the ongoing violence in and around Israel started with the invasion by Hamas on 7 October 2023.

Israel was proclaimed a state on 14 May 1948 and as part of the United Nations agreement the State of Israel was to have 56% of the land of Palestine and the Palestinians 44% – even though there were twice as many Palestinians as Jews living in the country at that time. The Israelis accepted those conditions. The Palestinians did not.

Now Israel occupies over 80% of the land. The Palestinians occupy Gaza, a bombed and destroyed enclave with one of the highest densities of population in the world, and the West Bank where Israel is building new (by international law illegal) Jewish settlements, and the Jewish settlers are murdering the landowners.

The occupation of Palestinian lands and desecration of the Palestinian people and culture

does not justify the attack of 7 October 2023. Israel is not a democracy. The majority of the Palestinian population, once the majority, are not allowed to vote.

Israel has started at least 17 wars with its neighbours and or “citizens”, most of which were started on the premise that they were “primitive” strikes. That means that both sides were probably preparing for war and one side (Israel) struck first.

Israel, with its backer USA, has now started a war with Iran and another war with Lebanon. Israel says it will occupy 10% of Lebanon. The history of modern Israel is complex, the issues are many. Justification of war is difficult at any time. There has been one dominant aggressor and usually one winner in these conflicts.

Peter Fuller, Narrabeen

Hear! Hear!

Dear Editor, everywhere I look, there is chaos masquerading as “modern life,” but I have a solution that will return order to this once-decent Northern Beaches society.

First: e-bikes. I propose an immediate registration system, complete with number plates, annual inspections, and a licensing fee. If my old Holden needed a rego, so should these battery-powered contraptions.

Then there are the brush turkeys. Once a novelty, now a menace. A tagging system would at least show them we mean business. Equally concerning is the increasing trend of young people treating public transport like Bondi Beach. A bare skin tax will ensure that standards are maintained.

Public drinking also warrants a modest fee per beverage, discouraging excess while contributing to the public purse.

Which brings me to bull sharks. Why are these creatures exempt from the rules the rest of us must follow? Tag them, tax them, relocate them. We need more regulation, more oversight, and yes, more taxation. It is the only language disorder understands.

But let me be perfectly clear: not everything should be taxed. I refer, of course, to rental properties. These are the backbone of responsible investment and must remain untouched by the heavy hand of bureaucracy.

Bert Grumbles

OMG! Wear sunscreen!

Hey Tawny. Skin Cancer Clinic. Thing chopped out. Selfie to check on wound healing etc. Face. Major tape. Observed guidelines. Checked – no issues. Day 2: Never do selfies...Too scary! Thought I looked 28. NOT. My wish? Will still have 2 eyebrows after all this. Not one. After tape is ripped off, I'm going to buy BIG SUNGLASSES, HUGE HAT AND PAPER BAG. In interim, Bert Grumbles? At least you've got two eyebrows. Pretty lucky though. Years of being an outdoor worker. Baz Luhrmann's 'Wear Sunscreen' – played it over and over to my kids growing up. Listen to it. They remember. It's gold. One last thing. Lawrence Street, Freshie. Today. Toyota Troopy? Motor running. Parked. Diesel. Girl. Scrolling. 20 mins later, still doing her thing. Phone. Go figure. Limited fuel for farmers. But all good! She just sat there doing her thing. Go girl!

The Oracle

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



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Card surcharge con: Big banks win, consumers pay

When the Reserve Bank of Australia announced it would ban all debit and credit card surcharges from October, Governor Michele Bullock framed it as overdue consumer relief. What she did not say is every small business can no longer pass on card costs transparently, so will build them into prices instead, feeding directly into the inflation measure Bullock is charged with taming.

“The RBA has poured fuel onto the inflation fire it is supposed to extinguish.” Brad Kelly, co-founder of the Independent Payments Forum, told MWM. “This was their opportunity to make real reform to the payments system, and they’ve done nothing. It’s an absolute joke. It’s inflationary. It discriminates against small business and firmly entrenches the cross-subsidy of small business to big business. The reality is that businesses are going to put up their fees – for your \$10 coffee and cake it won’t be \$10.16, it’ll be \$10.50 or \$11!”

Treasurer Jim Chalmers claimed consumers will save \$1.6 billion. The small business verdict was the opposite. Wes Lambert, CEO of the Australian Restaurant and Cafe Association, said, “The RBA’s decision beggars belief. They couldn’t explain how this would lower costs for small business, which was one of their stated mandates. We expect that on the first of October, restaurants and cafes around the country will be forced to put up their menu prices. And, actually, the RBA has said that this is more transparent for consumers when they can see the higher price all in one place.”

Theo Fokkare, CEO of the Australian Association of Convenience Stores, said: “They have completely ignored the feedback from people who are actually experiencing this failed payment system...ultimately, the price of everything will go up, even for those using cash. The reality is, any merchant fees that can’t be surcharged will now be built into the cost. So ultimately everyone pays more for everything.”

The real winners are the tax-minimising US card schemes Visa and Mastercard, and Australia’s taxpayer-backed banking oligopoly. Visa and Mastercard, operating on profit margins around 50%, will benefit from the surge of card transactions a surcharge ban generates, as every business previously steering customers toward cash routes – or EFTPOS – can no



The tap and go funnel into inflation overdrive

longer show via surcharges that card is more expensive. This means that they are now likely to simply default to card scheme (Visa/Mastercard) payments.

The surcharging framework was designed, implemented and defended by the RBA across more than two decades. Bullock joined the bank’s Payments Policy Department as Chief Manager in 1998, promoted to Head of Payments Policy in 2007, and held that role through the 2008 review that declared the framework sound. In 2023, Bullock was still defending surcharging, arguing “the right to surcharge provides an important incentive for payment schemes to keep their fees low.”

Blended pricing was the mechanism used to game it. Payment service providers such as Square, Tyro, Zeller and Smartpay offered merchants a single flat rate covering all card types, embedding their margin in the blend. A customer paying with a basic debit card whose real interchange cost might be 0.2% was charged the same surcharge as if they had paid with the most expensive premium card. The RBA framework permitted it, and the new regime leaves it intact.

The surcharge ban will stop the visible bleeding at the checkout, but not the bleeding itself. It will move it into the price of a coffee, a restaurant meal, and a council rates notice – and from there into the inflation data that lands on Michele Bullock’s desk each month, confronting her with the consequences of a reform she both helped design and, two decades later, declared a failure.

Words: **Michael Sainsbury**, Michael West Media



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Image: Blake Wiszon - Unsplash



\$200 showers and a \$136 gardener

Welcome to the new world order of support at home

Families are furious over the government's new Support at Home program. When I say "families", I mean the sandwich generation, middle-aged kids tasked with finding care for mum or dad while running their own lives.

As an aged care financial advisor for over 25 years, I've decoded these new pricing schedules. They are maddeningly complex. But this article isn't about outrage; it's about mastering the system's logic so you get the best outcome.

Safety over lifestyle

The new system shifts focus away from lifestyle subsidies back to clinical support. The government still provides the exact same funding pool based on clinical need, however, if you have the means, you must now pay a larger share for non-clinical services designed to keep you independent.

Out-of-pocket costs split into three buckets:

- **Clinical Care (Nursing):**
100% government-funded.
- **Independence (Personal Care):**
You contribute 5% to 50%.
- **Everyday Living (Cleaning/Gardening):**
You contribute 17.5% to 80%.

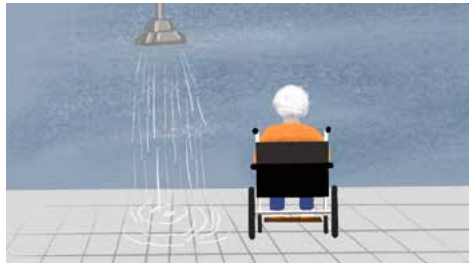
The \$200 shower

How does a shower cost \$200 out-of-pocket? Working backwards from a recent example: A provider applied a \$200/hr weekend surge rate with a two-hour minimum. (The baseline is ~\$100/hr - but expect 20-30% higher on the Beaches). The individual was assessed for the maximum 50% co-contribution - assuming assets over \$900k - creating a \$200 shower.

A pensioner pays 5% (\$20 out-of-pocket) for that exact same shower. However, \$380 is deducted from their fixed quarterly package.

The \$136 gardener & hidden margins

Self-funded retirees pay 80% for "Everyday Living." If a provider charges \$170/hr for essential light gardening, you pay \$136. Why so high? Hidden margins. The government strictly capped "Care Management" fees at 10%. To recover that lost administration revenue, providers artificially inflate the hourly rates of support workers.



At \$200 a shower, safe to say you've installed a Rheem

Logic suggests finding a more cost-effective way to manage the yard. (Hint to Beaches kids: keep up those letter drops offering lawn mowing - it could fast-track your first DiroDi!)

Know the logic, avoid the traps

1. Be clear on exactly what mum or dad's contribution to their services are.
2. Be clear on exactly how much of a package you have, and how far that money will go.
3. Be crystal clear on what the providers charge.

The reality is many providers are struggling with their invoicing and cannot clearly explain their pricing. Worse, new operators are popping up. Unscrupulous actors thrive on complexity.

This is exactly why we built the Later Life App - to cut through the complexity weighing down the sandwich generation. It doesn't just take a PDF of a provider's charges, it looks at the whole picture to help you calculate how much Age Pension mum or dad is eligible for and exactly what subsidies they should apply for. It translates Medicare and the PBS, outlines the scope of options like the Home Equity Access Scheme (HEAS) loan, and clarifies how they will be assessed.

Once they have their package, the app matches it with provider costs to all make sense. The better you master the logic, the more value you extract, the safer you are from surprises. This is about being prepared, instead of reacting.

Words: **Brendan Ryan**, Later Life Advice

The **Later Life App** will be available soon. For all updates, visit laterlifeadvice.com.au

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Salvatore Cavallaro, Dee Why





Joanna Jackson, 72% stronger for life Scott Hood, VAMOS founder

Health & Fitness

Not a gym. Not PT. Not a class. Why VAMOS has filled up fast!

Over the past couple of years, I've heard VAMOS Strength Training come up more and more in conversation. Not through big advertising or promotions – but through people. Friends. Locals. Neighbours. Usually along the lines of: "I've finally found something that works."

I first spoke to Scott (founder and Curl Curl local) when VAMOS launched, and decided to check in ahead of their 2nd anniversary to see how things were going.

A different kind of training

VAMOS isn't a typical gym. It's not a group fitness class. It's not personal training either. Instead, it's best described as a personalised strength training system.

Each member trains in their own private workout space, following a structured program designed to build strength progressively over time with knowledgeable coaches always nearby to guide and support.

It's calm. Focused. And noticeably free from the usual chaos and intimidation that can come with traditional gyms.

Why it's working

I asked Scott what he set out to build. "Most people don't struggle with exercise because they don't care about their health," he told me. "They struggle because the system around them doesn't work, it's impersonal, confusing, inconsistent, or intimidating. That's especially true with strength training."

The solution, he says, was simplicity: "People just need to show up twice a week, at times that suit them. We take care of the rest. The programming, the progression, the coaching. People are busy and juggling a lot, so we try to remove as many barriers as possible."

That simplicity and convenience is clearly resonating. After two years, VAMOS Balgowlah has reached capacity with a growing waitlist of locals wanting to get started.

Real people, real progress

The members I spoke to all shared a similar experience. Many started as complete beginners. Others had tried gyms for years without finding consistency or achieving results. Now, they're not only

getting stronger but actually sticking with it.

The average age of the VAMOS athlete base is 51, with 65% female. Across more than 300 members, the average strength gain after the first 12 weeks is an impressive 33%, with many long-term members doubling their total strength over time.

For Scott, that's what matters most: "Helping people get stronger for life is everything to us. We measure progress closely to make sure the training is working, but it's the life benefits that matter most. More energy, fewer aches and pains, more confidence. And interestingly, a lot of people come in saying they hate training... and end up actually enjoying it."

Something different is happening here

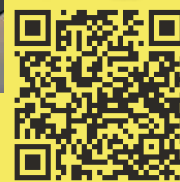
Reaching capacity in under two years is no small feat particularly in a crowded fitness market. But what stands out most isn't just the equipment or the programming. It's the experience. No noise. No confusion. No sense of being watched or judged. Just a clear plan, supportive coaching, and steady, measurable progress.

VAMOS doesn't feel like it's competing with traditional gyms. It feels like it's solving a different problem altogether and building an incredible community at the same time. And judging by the number of locals quietly recommending it to each other, as well as its recent expansion into Mosman, this may only be the beginning...VAMOS!

Words: **Liam Carroll**



Let's go!



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Cover Artist

David Manuell

How long have you lived on the Beaches? Since 1964. My first memory is looking out the windows of the children's ward at Manly Hospital watching the sailing boats on Sydney Harbour.

What's your favourite beach? Manly Beach because different sections have unique waves. Virtually every day, a friend and I have walked along the beach front for over 35 years.

If you had to live anywhere else in the world, where would that second-best place to live be? There's nowhere better than Manly, however, I am interested in seeing Cornwall, where my great grandfather came from.

What inspired your cover art? The untouched pristine nature at Pittwater.

What inspires your work in general? This goes back a long way. Dad had me in a pram looking close-up at a Monet painting, so it appeared to be a lot of paint spots. When he pulled me back it morphed into a wonderful scene. Then he pushed me forward again, the scene became paint dots again. I thought it was magic. I am inspired by Art History, and it is easy for me to spend ten hours just looking at pictures in any major art gallery.

How would you describe your art? After studying art all my life as well as teaching it for 40 years, my art has become a response to art theory. Seeing great artists' work in real life and thinking, "I could do that!" has been a long-kept secret of mine. I love the range of art from pure abstraction to hyper-realism. My art is a bit wonky, sometimes humorous, colourful with much consideration given to tone, colour and composition.

What is your favourite part of the process? When I am working with a group of other artists, the energy and creative power is amplified tenfold, which is both satisfying and fun.

Which artists, dead or alive, would you most like to have dinner with? Wow! Having dinner with the Surrealists would be a hoot because the realms of their imagination could take you anywhere. And it would be very cool to have



David's big hands make light work

dinner with the first human that ever existed.

How did you discover you had a gift for art? I did some pretty good drawings on the wall inside the cupboard that I didn't think anyone else would see but I got busted...after that my parents gave me plenty of scrap paper.

Did you study art? My father taught me all he knew about art from before school. I had a fantastic teacher, Jim Woodbury at Forest High. I studied Architecture at Sydney Uni then Art Education at Newcastle Uni.

What are you currently working on? Paintings about Pittwater with an underlying notion of the Salt Water people of Manly driven up to Broken Bay after the English arrived.

What's your favourite thing about what you do? When you have made something out of nothing that is then pleasing to the eye. The satisfaction you get when you have done something creative. You can't buy this feeling.

What would you like to see in the future of the Northern Beaches art scene? Having had a long-time involvement with Manly Art Gallery, things keep getting better in the Northern Beaches art scene and I am confident this will continue.

Are there any words of wisdom you're guided by? Be who you are.

Check out Dave's work at his exhibition running **May 2 to 10** at **The Landship Gallery**, off Middle Head Road in Georges Heights, Mosman.

Follow [@david.manuell.3](#) on Instagram for updates and email Dave directly for commissions via dmanuel@yahoo.com

South Steyne Medical Centre

Get to know Dr. Richard Curran

Dr Richard Curran, MBBS (USyd), FRACS, is an experienced General and Laparoscopic Surgeon. Dr Curran has a large practice in surgery for gallstone disease ie laparoscopic cholecystectomy, for both emergency and elective patients.

A graduate of the University of Sydney, Dr Curran completed his advanced surgical training on the NSW Western rotation and was awarded Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (FRACS) in 2008. He is currently a Consultant General Surgeon at Westmead Hospital and Blacktown & Mt Druitt Hospitals, with a clinical focus on laparoscopic general surgery. Dr Curran operates

privately at Westmead Private, Norwest Private, and now also consults at Delmar Private Hospital in Dee Why.

Dr Curran's broad surgical background allows him to manage a wide range of general surgical conditions, with an emphasis on minimally invasive techniques where appropriate. His approach is grounded in careful assessment, clear communication, and evidence-based decision-making, ensuring patients are well informed and supported throughout their care.

Consulting locally at South Steyne Medical Centre enables patients to access specialist expertise in a familiar and convenient setting, with the added benefit of integrated



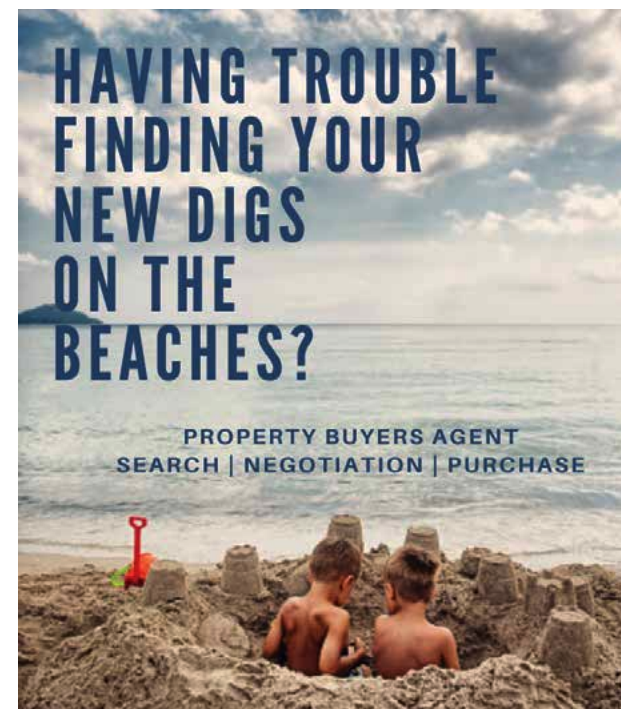
general practice support. Outside of the operating theatre, Dr Curran is an enthusiastic cyclist and enjoys spending time on two wheels. Keep an out for him cycling around North Head.

Referrals can be organised via South Steyne Medical Centre reception, making access to specialist surgical consultation straightforward for patients and referring GPs.

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BROOKVALE ARTS DISTRICT



My Life with Her

In 2013, Gabby Villalba arrived in Sydney from Venezuela with her family and cameras. Everything was new, unstable. "Photographing was a way to anchor myself," she says, "not to get lost in the middle of change."

She had no plan for a series. No exhibition in mind. She was just documenting — the way she always had, pointing the camera at whatever needed to be held still. What she didn't know yet was that she was also pointing it at herself.

My Life with Her / Mi Vida con Ella is Gabby's upcoming solo exhibition, opening May 16 at Curl Curl Creative Space. It's a twelve-year body of work built from self-portraits: her body, her emotions, the shifts that accumulate across a life and rarely get named out loud. And running alongside it, her daughter growing up. The title came late, discovered while sorting through archives, when she realised the thread wasn't just motherhood or migration.

"It's my life with her, but also my life looking at myself through her."

The work is slow by design. Cyanotype — a 19th-century process that develops images using sunlight and iron salts — sits at the centre of the practice, layered with collage, photograms, and hand-altered surfaces. There's a reason she works this way. "The process forces me to slow down and breathe differently. It lets me transform what weighs on me into something visible and tangible."

There's also a geography in the work. Gabby grew up on Isla de Margarita, Venezuela — ocean, strong sun, walking barefoot. Dee Why gave her the same logic: shades of blue, the seaweed, the particular quality of light reflecting off the salt water. Two coasts, one continuous thread running through the images.

She held this work private for years, quietly building it while documenting the creative community around her: artists, studios and the evolution of Brookvale as a place where that kind of work gets made. What changed, she says, was understanding that vulnerability could be something other than exposure. "It can also be a bridge that opens a conversation about changes, stages and emotions that many of us live through and rarely name."

Showing it at Curl, only minutes from home, feels deliberate. "Like closing a circle," she says, "from a place of belonging."

Curl Curl Creative Space, 105 Abbott Rd, North Curl Curl. Opens 16 May.

@gabbyvillalba_in_frame
gabby-villalba.com

Words: Miguel González
Self-portrait photograph: Gabby Villalba

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Each month we print 50,000 full colour magazines, with 47,500 delivered directly to residential letterboxes, and 2,500 placed in highly frequented public places from Manly to Palm Beach.

Contact

Contact Liam to find out how you can showcase your business, service, or initiative, and fully engage with the Northern Beaches community.

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May 2026 Tide Chart

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				1 0201 0.53 0755 1.49 1344 0.57 2013 1.80	2 0241 0.52 0833 1.44 1414 0.61 2045 1.81	3 0319 0.52 0913 1.40 1445 0.65 2118 1.81
4 0358 0.54 0952 1.36 1517 0.69 2153 1.79	5 0438 0.57 1032 1.32 1553 0.74 2230 1.75	6 0521 0.61 1115 1.28 1631 0.78 2310 1.70	7 0609 0.65 1203 1.25 1717 0.82 2356 1.64	8 0702 0.68 1258 1.23 1811 0.86	9 0049 1.59 0800 0.68 1400 1.24 1916 0.88	10 0149 1.56 0855 0.65 1503 1.29 2029 0.87
11 0254 1.56 0945 0.60 1600 1.39 2139 0.81	12 0354 1.58 1029 0.55 1647 1.51 2244 0.73	13 0449 1.60 1111 0.50 1732 1.65 2342 0.61	14 0542 1.62 1152 0.46 1816 1.80	15 0036 0.50 0634 1.61 1234 0.45 1901 1.93	16 0130 0.40 0728 1.59 1318 0.46 1948 2.04	17 0224 0.32 0823 1.55 1405 0.49 2037 2.10
18 0319 0.29 0920 1.50 1455 0.53 2129 2.11	19 0416 0.30 1018 1.45 1548 0.58 2222 2.08	20 0516 0.33 1118 1.40 1645 0.64 2317 2.00	21 0617 0.39 1220 1.37 1745 0.70	22 0016 1.89 0719 0.45 1325 1.36 1851 0.75	23 0119 1.77 0818 0.51 1429 1.39 2002 0.78	24 0224 1.67 0911 0.55 1528 1.44 2115 0.78
25 0327 1.58 0959 0.57 1622 1.52 2224 0.76	26 0424 1.50 1041 0.59 1710 1.60 2326 0.72	27 0515 1.45 1118 0.61 1753 1.67	28 0019 0.67 0603 1.41 1155 0.62 1832 1.73	29 0105 0.62 0647 1.39 1230 0.64 1908 1.78	30 0145 0.58 0730 1.37 1304 0.65 1944 1.82	31 0224 0.55 0811 1.36 1339 0.67 2018 1.84

- New moon
- First Quarter
- Full Moon
- Last Quarter

Info: Bureau of Meteorology | Photo: A-L Takes Flight | @atlakesflight



Culling shark realities

Recent shark incidents have shocked the Northern Beaches community, and it's left everyone asking questions

Why did it happen?

The species of concern in NSW are the great white, tiger, and bull sharks. Unlike great whites and tigers, bull sharks inhabit freshwater and coastal areas including rivers, harbours and estuaries. All species migrate seasonally with great whites preferring cool winter waters, while tigers and bulls are more common around Sydney in summer.

It's important to remember that though extremely traumatic, shark bites remain incredibly rare – though some conditions increase the risk. In January, the extremely heavy rainfall led to runoff and murky water – reducing visibility. These conditions stimulate bull shark feeding behaviour and reduces their ability to visually identify. The combination of factors tragically led to greatly increased risk which saw 4 bites in 48 hours, including a fatality.

Should we cull bull sharks?

Following these incidents, there have been calls from some in the community for shark culling for public safety. This will not work. Why not?

Firstly, bull sharks are already culled. NSW shares the population with QLD, as it ranges the entire east coast. The QLD Shark Control Program kills an average of 130 bulls a year, and thousands have been killed since the program began in 1962. NSW shark nets and NSW fishers, who are each allowed to kill one bull a day, add to that total.

Secondly, shark culling does not reduce the risk of shark bite. Bull sharks are migratory. Culling for public safety assumes that a local population can be reduced through fishing. As bull sharks are constantly on the move, there's no such thing as a "local population". Additionally, culling actually attracts sharks. The culling methods only serve to attract sharks and stimulate feeding behaviour. Shark nets, baited drumlines, targeted fishing's use of bait, these all add blood, viscera and animal carcasses to the water, attracting and exciting sharks, making the areas in which culling occurs far more dangerous.



Juvenile hammerhead drowned in Palm Beach shark net

Evidence

Humane World for Animals challenged shark culling in the Great Barrier Reef in court in 2019. The judges found:

Modern scientific consensus is that the risk of shark bite is not related to shark abundance but rather abundance of ocean users and other external factors such as anomalous weather events. We are convinced that shark culling does not reduce the risk of shark attack on the individual – the scientific evidence before us is overwhelming in this regard.

Further, from 1959–1976, Hawaii culled 4,668 sharks. No change in shark bite rate was found.

So, what can be done?

There is no silver bullet, but there are ways to reduce the risk of human–shark interactions:

1. Grow the drone program: The NSW Government has made a start, but greater coverage will always improve the ability to spot potential risks.
2. Equip the public with knowledge about conditions that increase/decrease risk, such as weather, time of day, and patrols and surveillance times.
3. Remove shark nets. Dead and dying wildlife in shark nets attract sharks. The last 3 incidents on the Northern Beaches occurred near shark nets.
4. Use of verified personal shark deterrents.

These things can be implemented to immediately improve safety. Culling bull sharks might make some people feel better, but it would be at best a placebo, and it may even be counter-productive. Do we want the community to feel safer, or do we want to reduce the risk?

Words: **Lawrence Chlebeck**, Humane World for Animals, Australia. Learn more at hsi.org.au

Meet Your Councillors

Nick Beugeard, Curl Curl ward

What's your earliest memory of the Beaches? Freshwater Beach, blown away by the beauty we so easily take for granted.

Who inspires you? Ordinary people doing extraordinary things quietly – the volunteer who shows up every Saturday, the parent coaching the local team. They remind me why this work matters.

What do you do in the real world? I run an AI software company, sit on corporate boards, and speak about how technology is reshaping the way we live and work.

When did you decide to run for Council? It's the family business. My mother served as a councillor in Guernsey, where I was born, and later entered parliament. That idea of direct,

personal accountability stuck with me.

What motivated you to run? The Northern Beaches is remarkable, but there's more we can do. From mental health and homelessness to grassroots sport and everyday services, being a councillor means you can directly make a difference.

What have been the biggest challenges? You're a councillor 24/7. The people closest to you carry that too.

What have been your greatest triumphs? Securing a multi-year program to maintain our roads, parks and infrastructure before it quietly became a crisis.

How can residents best engage with Council? For op-



erational matters – bins, road repairs, maintenance – use the website, it's the fastest way to get something resolved. For changes you'd like to see, send Councillors an email or pick up the phone. And if you disagree with where a councillor stands on an issue; meet them. We genuinely love hearing from community members. That's what this is all about.
It's Sunday, 10am, where's Nick? I've just walked the dog at Curl Curl, and I'm now reading Council papers. Some things don't change.

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What is "Tradies Mentoring Tradies"? A hands-on coaching and mentoring service for tradies. We help tradies learn how to run a business while doing all the hard work for them.

What inspired the idea? I was a former tradie. And I was good at my trade but had no idea how to run a business. I engaged a business coach to help me turn things around and found while it was awesome having someone to bounce ideas off and help me to structure my business properly, I was too busy to do the work. So, each week I would turn up to an arse whipping.

What led you to this opportunity? I was a former tradie turned business coach who only wanted to help tradies. My overall ambition is to reduce the suicide rate amongst tradies in Australia and NZ.

Had you worked in this field originally? No, I was a chef

who became a painter and decorator. I was also a sports coach who loved coaching but there is no money in soccer coaching in Australia.

What convinced you to go for it? I couldn't see myself being on the tools forever and my coach who I was working with said that I would make a great business coach due to my hands on experience.

What problem are you solving? I am helping tradies to build out the back end of their business while they stay on the tools making money. Tradies are great at what they do but when it comes to the business side, they suck. They will then always default back to what they know, and their business will never get built. That's why we do it for them.

Who are your customers? Tradies who want to scale from where they are no but have no idea how or where to start.

How do they benefit from what you offer? Because we are so hands on, and we have an entire pit crew of professional service people who can help them with every aspect of their business. They no longer have to search for anything. We just plug in the right people at the time when they are needed.

What have been the biggest challenges so far? Getting my message out to more tradies who I know need the help but don't know that we exist.

What have been your biggest triumphs? Most of the tradies I work with have businesses that are now making them 20% net profit and they are achieving all of their life goals.

What's your favourite thing about life on the Northern Beaches? The freedom of being able to walk Long Reef every morning.

What's next for Tradies Mentoring Tradies? We are ready to launch and get out to more tradies. We run monthly meet ups that and want to reach more and more tradies with those sessions. They are free events with guest presenters giving advice (no sales) to help tradies run their businesses better. I would love to see them full as we also run them at a local brewery to help put money back into the community.

Interview: **Liam Carroll**
Featuring: **Aaron Kemp**, Founder of **Tradies Mentoring Tradies**

Learn more about how Tradies Mentoring Tradies can help you at tradiesmentoringtradies.com.au and follow [@tradiesmentoring](https://www.instagram.com/tradiesmentoring) on Instagram for all updates

Busy on the Tools..... But Still Not Making Real Money?

Most tradies are excellent craftsmen with their work in high demand. It's their day-to-day business management skills which are holding them back and causing them pain.

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- ✿ Guessing your numbers each month
- ✿ Doing everything yourself
- ✿ Unsure how to actually grow



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- ✓ What's causing cashflow stress
- ✓ The gaps holding you back
- ✓ What to fix first

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Transforming lives through puppy power

Assistance Dogs Australia are enhancing the independence of Australians with disability one dog at a time.

On any given morning somewhere in Sydney, you might spot a young labrador sitting patiently outside a café, resisting the temptation to scoop up dropped crumbs. It's not just good doggy manners - it's the first step in a life that could transform someone else's.

For volunteers like Beth Kates, raising Assistance Dog puppies is more than a feel-good pastime - it's a commitment to shaping future independence for people with disability, autism or post-traumatic stress. And right now, Assistance Dogs Australia (ADA) is calling for more locals to step forward to care for their puppies from 20 weeks to 15 months.

Beth knows firsthand how powerful the experience can be. After moving from England two years ago and leaving her own ageing dogs behind, she felt the absence deeply. "I really missed having dogs around," she says. "I came from a farm in England and now I live in a city so becoming a puppy raiser for ADA was a really good way for me to enjoy some time with dogs."

Her first trainee, Cairo, quickly became part of the family, going everywhere with her and her teenage sons. "They go everywhere with you, the shops, the cinema, everywhere," Beth explained. "They have to because you are training them to be able to go everywhere for the people they support."

The constant companionship builds something deeper



Beth with Assistance Dog in Training, Cairo

than a typical pet-owner relationship. "You get a much closer bond than you would with a normal pet dog," she says. "They become really bonded with you... and do everything you ask of them because that's what they need to be doing as assistance dogs."

The role, though, does have some emotional challenges. Saying goodbye when the puppy returns for advanced training is never easy. "I absolutely fell in love with Cairo. He was amazing, so saying goodbye was really, really hard," Beth said.

But the positive impact outweighs the heartbreak and seeing Cairo again later reaffirmed Beth's decision. "He definitely remembered me, and he was just giving me lots of big hugs," she said.

Now raising her second puppy named Nancy, Beth is helping shape another future Assistance Dog, one that will learn to open doors, retrieve items and remain calm in busy environments and give a person independence.

"You want a perfectly behaved dog, so getting to that point requires patience and consistency and daily training...so that they've got the best ever manners," Beth explained. "Knowing that you are doing it to help people who need assistance in their daily life really keeps you motivated," Beth says. "It's an incredibly important thing to do."

ADA provides training, covers food and veterinary costs, and offers ongoing support through a network of trainers and fellow raisers to ensure volunteers aren't alone in the journey.

With demand for Assistance Dogs growing, ADA is urging more Northern Beaches residents, especially those working from home, retired, or with flexible schedules, to consider bringing a puppy into their homes to help change lives.

Words: **Robyn Holland**

To find out more or register your interest, visit assistance dogs.org.au/volunteer

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Mal's Wild Side

Northern Beaches locals travel "overseas" to save forests

You'd think protecting what's left of our native forests would be a no brainer, right...?

But no, they're still clear-felling old growth trees in the north and south of our state like there's no tomorrow. And most are being turned into low grade wood chips - not houses or furniture. (Australia has more than enough plantations to meet its wood needs).

What's worse, this is being carried out by the loss making, government-owned, NSW Forestry Corporation which is propped up by taxpayers like you and me. This instrumentality has been fined numerous times for illegal practices - quite a feat when you think that forestry operations are largely exempt from environmental laws.

Appalled at the ongoing loss of biodiversity (including koalas) from industrial logging, the Bob Brown Foundation organised a national "March in March" to call for an end to this destructive industry.

As many Peninsula residents care deeply about this issue,

quite a few took the almost unprecedented step of crossing the harbour to join the event at Hyde Park (yes there is life on the other side of the water). It was a beautiful, colourful, peaceful, creative, vibrant affair with amazing signage, exquisite outfits and a flock of handmade parrots on poles whose wings flapped when their strings were tugged.

Earlier in the same week, pro-logging lobbyists had been given special access to meet politicians inside parliament house. The community didn't enjoy such privileges, but their message echoed loud and clear from the streets. "Stop native forest logging now!"

Frightful forestry facts

1. Only half of Australia's pre 1788 forests remain uncleared.
2. Approximately 500,000 hectares of land are cleared in Australia every year.

3. Between the years 2000 and 2017, 7.7 million hectares of known threatened species habitat were cleared.
4. For every 100 hectares of land cleared, approximately 15,000 reptiles, 2,000 birds and 500 native mammals perish.
5. In 2020, NSW Forestry's hardwood division made a loss of \$28 million. The corporation received \$247 million in grants.
6. If Australia was to stop logging native forests, we would reach our legislated 43% greenhouse gas reduction target by 2030
7. The biggest donor to the ALP in the 2022 Federal election was the forestry union CFMEU
8. Australia has the second highest rate of biodiversity loss on the planet (after Indonesia).
9. NSW now has penalties of up to \$22,000 or 2.5 years in gaol for people who peaceably try and stop the felling of trees for wood-chips
10. Today more than one million of the planet's eight million plant and animal species are at risk of extinction.

Which all begs the question: If a tree falls in state forest and taxpayer money doesn't subsidise NSW Forestry's losses, does a Koala bear the cost?

Scan here to sign the petition to protect native forests



Words: **Mal Fisher**
For Wild Man Mal's latest updates follow **@thegreenmanly** on IG

Photo: Mal Fisher - iG@thegreenmanly

Art & Culture

Art, design, and innovation

Entries are now open for the **2026 Northern Beaches Environmental Art & Design Prize**, the leading national environmental prize for artists and designers, featuring a significant \$46,000 prize pool.

Artists and designers, including young people 7 to 18 years, are invited to submit their work on the theme of the environment. If you're selected as a finalist, you'll have the opportunity to showcase your work and unique insights on the natural world, sustainable living and the environmental challenges we face.

The Prize is proudly supported for its fifth consecutive year by Foundation Sponsor, **Colormaker Industries**, the local sustainable paint business

leading in environmental responsibility and sustainability.

"This partnership underscores a shared mission to use creativity and innovation as catalysts for a more sustainable future," says David Stuart, Managing Director of Colormaker Industries.

"Supporting this prize since its inception demonstrates our commitment to the planet."

Colormaker produces a diverse range of eco-friendly products, including PERMACRYLIK® Scenic Paints - a staple for fine artists and muralists, PERMASET® Textile Inks, eco-friendly architectural paints and Australia's No. 1 swimming pool paint.

Their 100-kW solar array is on track to save over 1,000



2025 winners, The ArtHitects

tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions by July.

Entries for the prize close 18 May with the exhibition to be held 7 August - 20 September at the Manly Art Gallery & Museum and Curl Curl Creative Space. Good luck!

Scan here to apply now or visit northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au





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GIG GUIDE

FRI 1ST MAY	MONTHLY KARAOKE PARTY <small>Free event - 1st Friday each month</small>
SAT 9TH MAY	PLAYLUNCH <small>Sex Ed Regional Tour w/ Special Guests</small> SOLD OUT!
FRI 15TH MAY	CHEEKY LEASH <small>Free Entry - Great Southern Nights Event w/ Special Guests</small>
SAT 16TH MAY	BACK TO THE MAC FLEETWOOD MAC EXPERIENCE
FRI 5TH JUNE	MONTHLY KARAOKE PARTY <small>Free event - 1st Friday each month</small>
SAT 27TH JUNE	DON'T CHANGE THE ULTIMATE INXS TRIBUTE
SAT 4TH JULY	ONE OF THESE NIGHTS THE EAGLES EXPERIENCE

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The N word

Why "narcissist" has lost its meaning and what we need to talk about instead

Narcissist. It's a word thrown around so freely that it's started to lose its meaning. An ex who didn't text back. A boss who took credit for your work. A friend who made your birthday dinner about them. We reach for it constantly, and often what we mean is: that person hurt me, or was overly self-centred, and I want a word big enough to hold that. But the clinical reality is far more specific, and far less common.

Narcissistic Personality Disorder is a diagnosable psychiatric condition. People living with NPD have a pervasive pattern of grandiosity, a profound lack of empathy, and an intense need for admiration that cuts across every area of their life. It's not situational. It's not a bad day or a selfish phase. It's a deeply entrenched way of relating to the world that causes significant harm to others, and quietly, to themselves. This is not your everyday self-centred person.

Narcissistic or self-centred tendencies however, self-absorption, low empathy in moments of stress, a pull toward being the centre of the room, exist on a spectrum and show up in many people, particularly those who haven't done much inner work. Developmental immaturity plays a significant role here.

When a person hasn't quite figured out who they are outside of other people's opinions of them, when their sense of self remains fragile or incomplete, they tend to stay oriented around their own needs, feelings and narrative. Not necessarily out of malice. Often out of a kind of emotional arrested development. The world still mostly revolves around them because internally, they never quite moved past that stage.

Here's where it gets interesting. Codependency, particularly the subcategories of control and low self-esteem, belong in this same conversation, even though it looks nothing like narcissism on the surface. The codependent controller doesn't puff themselves up. They can manage, orchestrate, manipulate, worry, be overbearing and over-function. But underneath the caretaking is a quiet and desperate need: to feel needed, significant, indispensable. To engineer their worth through how much others depend on them. It's approval-seeking behaviour disguised as selflessness, identifiable



The grandiose shadow of emotional fragility

by the fact that they may be resentful if proper recognition or validation is not granted.

Different expressions. Same wound. And in all three, the same underlying state: survival. These aren't character flaws so much as adaptations. Ways of getting through the world when your internal foundation was never quite solid enough to stand on.

Because here's what NPD, narcissistic tendencies and controlling codependency all share at their root: a fractured or underdeveloped sense of self. When you don't have a solid internal foundation, you go looking for it outside. You need to be admired, needed, praised, feared, chosen. You need the external world to tell you that you matter, because you haven't yet found a way to tell yourself.

A person with a whole and intact sense of self doesn't need any of that. They can be in a room without being the centre of it. They can be disagreed with without unravelling. They can love without controlling. That kind of groundedness isn't arrogance. It's the quietest, most radical form of self-respect and self-love there is.

My hope in writing this is to shine a light on self-oriented behaviours and their potential origins. Not to excuse harm, but to inform. Because when we understand ourselves and each other a little better, we're all better for it. Healing, coming to wholeness within yourself, and no longer needing the external world to validate your existence. That is one of the most liberating things a person can do.

Words: **Scout Smith-O'Leary**, The Love Scout.

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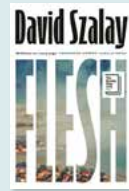
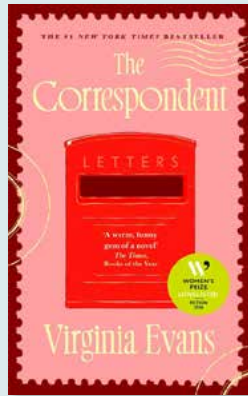
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Disturbingly brilliant reads you won't easily forget

Paige Turner Reviews

Worth the hype

The marketing hype surrounding new book releases is usually so over the top that it makes me not want to read those heavily promoted books. And yet, occasionally the hype is justified. Recently, I've read a cluster of novels that deserve the noise.

Take *The Good Liar*. **Denise Mina** doesn't so much write crime as dismantle it. This is not a neat puzzle to be solved, but something far murkier—an exploration of truth, perception, and the stories we tell ourselves to get through the day. It's sharp, disorienting, and entirely uninterested in comforting you.

The Correspondent could easily have been a gentle, episodic curiosity but **Virginia Evans** uses the form to peel back layers of character with quiet precision, not as a gimmick but as a scalpel. Every exchange reveals just enough and no more.

David Szalay's *Flesh* has a cold clarity that borders on ruthless, charting the physical

and emotional terrain of his characters with unnerving exactness. It's not comfortable reading, especially the first 50 pages. If you can get past them you're in for a read that is equal parts disturbing and compelling.

The Names by **Florence Knapp** is a novel about identity and connection but it's far more sinister, more a portrait of a relationship shaped by coercive control where language itself becomes a tool of domination. The husband at its centre is chillingly oppressive, the kind of character who exerts power in ways that are easy to overlook until they're impossible to ignore. Knapp captures that slow tightening of control and makes it chillingly believable.

Sally Hepworth's *Mad Mabel* has all the trappings of a crowd-pleaser—pace, intrigue, a central character you can't quite pin down—but it's smarter and darker than it first appears. Hepworth understands exactly what her readers expect and then subverts it.

And finally, *Wild Dark Shore* by **Charlotte McConaghy**.

This book delivers on that most overused of promises: immersion. This isn't just "evocative" writing—it's consuming, atmospheric in a way that sends shivers down your spine. You don't simply read it—you're consumed by it. You share the claustrophobia, futility, hunger, cold and the sheer brutality of it all. And then there's the landscape it describes that burrows into your brain whether you want it to or not

So yes, the hype machine remains fundamentally untrustworthy but every now and then, despite itself, it points in the right direction. What these novels share is a kind of authority. They each justify the attention they've been given.

Where to buy

Forget Amazon, shop local and support our wonderful independent book shops – Berkelouw Books Balgowlah and Mona Vale, Harry Hartog at the Mall and Humphreys at Manly Corso.

Words: **Paige Turner**

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PHOTO OF THE MONTH

Subject Girls just wanna have fun
Photographer Anne-Louise Towers IG @altakesflight



Subject Deadmans Playground
Photographer Caroline Faye IG @itscaroline_art



Subject Curiosity & Wisdom
Photographer Michelle Auer



Subject Fresh Prince and Tiaan crossing swords
Photographer Marie Boudreau IG @_surfbirds



Subject Magnificent 4m Diamond Python at ManlyDam
Photographer Jonas Daly



Subject Blue Ringed Octopus!! Shell be right
Photographer Anna Hughes



Subject What Long Reef childhood dreams are made of
Photographer Lindsay IG @swift.family.au



Subject Tawny avian deep in ponder at Chalky's karaoke
Photographer Chris Grabham IG @chrisgrabham



Subject Narrabeen aka Pelican Lakes
Photographer Richard Helich



Subject Cockatoo Freeway
Photographer Amanda Sala IG @sala_amanda

- How many Councillors serve on Northern Beaches Council?
- How many "Wards" does Northern Beaches Local Government Area Comprise?
- What is the real name of Home & Away superhero "Alf Stewart"?
- If you went surfing at Northern Beaches' "Sheep Stations", which beach were you at?
- Is South Steyne's surf life saving club formally known as "Manly Surf Life Saving Club" or "Manly Life Saving Club"?
- Which radio station hosts the annual "Hottest 100"?
- What product is sold by the organisation in TV series, "The Office"?
- How many planets in the solar system are bigger than Earth?
- What is the oldest "University of" in Australia: Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, or Tasmania?
- According to the well-known Kubler/Ross model, what are the first two stages of grief?
- Which country's name contains the word "love"?
- What are the two sequels to the movie "Meet the Parents"?
- What two colours are on the flag of Greenland?
- What do the letters N-A-T-O stand for in NATO?
- Played between the Brisbane Heat and Sydney Sixers, in what year was the first ever Big Bash game?
- Which former Australian Test cricketer was charged with mid-range drink driving in Sydney on 5 April?
- The US Defence Department was last year renamed to the Department of WHAT?
- The Strait of WHAT has become known as the choke point of the war between USA and Iran?
- What type of animal is Baloo in The Jungle Book?
- Make a 9-letter word from the following letters: U N O T A D I S C

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Sudoku Medium difficulty

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

RUMOUR HAS IT

A Manly man who only took up surfing in his late 30s and is living in Dubai is taking full advantage of drastically cut-price wartime wave pool rates, spending all day getting tubed in the Emerati desert on the fast track to Shred Lord status.

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Across*

- To infinity and beyond! (4)
- Be the change you wish to see in the world (7)
- That's one small step for man... (4)
- I am your father (5)
- Wherefore art thou Romeo? (6)
- D'oh! (5)

Down*

- Please explain (7)
- My precious (6)
- There's no place like home (7)
- Float like a butterfly sting like a bee (8)
- Life is like a box of chocolates (8)

*Answers are first names

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Star Signs

by Krystal Bawl

Taurus Apr 20 - May 21

When "Same Day Multi" applies to drinking games, you always win. Round up your mates for birthday drinks, their shout.

Gemini May 22 - Jun 21

Those skeletons in your closet are fed up and will burst out soon whether you like it or not. Brace yourself.

Cancer Jun 22 - Jul 22

Time to stop gloating about your EV and thrifty long drives. You're sucking the energy out of fossil-fueled friendships.

Leo Jul 23 - Aug 22

"My bad" does not exist in your vocabulary. Nor should it. You thought you made a mistake once, but you were wrong.

Virgo Aug 23 - Sep 23

Stop scratching yourself. You're only making it worse and friends are concerned you've become a health hazard.

Libra Sep 24 - Oct 23

In 20 years you'll look back and remember these as the best days of your life even though it may not feel that way today.

Scorpio Oct 24 - Nov 22

A cosmic trinity of Sun, Venus and Saturn hover over you this month, all marveling at how awesome you continue to be.

Sagittarius Nov 23 - Dec 21

That dear friend who always got you into trouble is set to return to your life. Time to be wild? Or change your number?

Capricorn Dec 22 - Jan 20

Despite the doom, money lands in your lap. Not enough for an elite golf club membership, but enough to keep on swinging.

Aquarius Jan 21 - Feb 19

Short days and cold nights are tailor made for your signature Beef Wellington dish. But be careful of Kiwi door knockers.

Pisces Feb 20 - Mar 20

Achieving financial freedom would afford dedicated time to focus on your emotional issues. Work's not so bad.

Aries Mar 21 - Apr 19

Finding time to relax guilt-free is challenging. Walking with earpods in and talking to yourself can work wonders.



Artist's Impression

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Trivia Answers
 1. 15 2. 5 3. Ray Meagher 4. Turrimetta or Little Narabeen 5. Manly Life Saving Club 6. Triple J Paper 8. 4 9. University of Sydney 10. Dental & Anger 11. Slovenia 12. Meet the Fockers & Little Fockers 13. Red & White 14. North Atlantic Treaty Organisation 15. 2011 16. David Warner 17. War 18. Hornuz 19. Bear 20. Custodian

Crossword Answers
 ACROSS: 2. Buzz 5. Mahatma 6. Neil 8. Darth 9. Juliet 10. Homer
 DOWN: 1. Pauline 3. Gollum 4. Dorothy 5. Muhammad 8. Forrest

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

Sudoku Solution



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