

Hills to Hawkesbury

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Local News, Local Events, Local People and Local Businesses

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If you prefer other channels to read news, we are also now on Telegram. Search our channel "Hills to Hawkesbury Community News". The nice thing about Telegram is you see all our news in date order. Unlike Facebook who use an algorithm so THEY decide what you see in your news feed. You can also read our latest news on twitter.

Why Advertise with Hills to Hawkesbury

Having our news published on different platforms means we are consistently increasing our website traffic month on month. Last month 46,000 readers visited our website, So if you are thinking of advertising with us, your ads will be seen by up to 46,000 users per month. We also send our weekly newsletter to over 6000 subscribers. In March our website was shown in search results to 706,000 potential new readers, who clicked through to our website 16,200 times.

Performance on Search results

Search type: Web | Date: 1st March – 30th March 2023

Total clicks
16.2K

Total impressions
706K

Hawkesbury Charity on TV

The Jeremiah Project, which is run out of the community kitchen on Macquarie St in Windsor, is the feature story over two consecutive weekends on Helping Hands - a television program broadcast across the Nine Network.

Producers of the TV show chose to feature The Jeremiah Project because of its connectedness to its local community, and its positive impact punches well above its weight.

In the television episodes, the founder of The Jeremiah Project and Hawkesbury local, Jacky Turano, explains how and why The Jeremiah Project started, and is moved to tears when talking about the people she serves.

"We are so blessed to receive so much support from the local community, from our volunteers and local businesses," said Jacky. "It helps us to be there for the community in their moment of need."

The Jeremiah Project will feature on Helping Hands in a two-part documentary over the weekends of Saturday 27 April and Saturday 4 May on 9Gem, Channel 9 and 9Now.

Helping Hands is the only TV program on mainstream media in Australia dedicated to social good.

"We are all about telling inspiring stories and facilitating empowering conversations," says the Executive Producer of Helping Hands, Richard Attieh. "We partner and collaborate with charities and their supporters, with social enterprises, with philanthropists and foundations, and businesses who lend a helping hand and make the world a better place."

The Jeremiah Project will premiere on Saturday 27 April at 10am on 9GEM, and be repeated over the weekend on Channel 9, and then made available 24/7 on 9Now.

The documentary features the support Jacky, The Jeremiah Project and The Community Kitchen receive from Aldi in Richmond, Lindt Chocolates, the South Windsor Pie Shop and The Richmond Club.

"We celebrate and shine a spotlight on the leaders of social good, visionaries, impact-makers and game-changers like Jacky, The Jeremiah Project and their supporters," continues Richard. "We would love to profile more wonderful works in the Hawkesbury."

"Viewers across Australia will be inspired by the work Jacky and the team do at The Jeremiah Project. They are heroes who make the world a better place."

The Jeremiah Project will be broadcast as follows:

- 9GEM at 10am
 - Saturday 27 April 2024
 - Saturday 4 May 2024
- Channel 9 at 5.30am
 - Sunday 28 April 2024
 - Sunday 5 May 2024
- 9Now available 24/7
 - Monday 28 April
 - Monday 6 May



Jacky and Trev sorting through donations

Hills to Hawkesbury

Community News | Local Stories, Local Events, Local People and Local Businesses

www.hillstohawkesbury.com.au | Facebook @hillstohawkesbury

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The Hills to Hawkesbury Community News has been serving this area for nearly 40 years. It's name may have changed over the decades but the commitment to providing a free service to the community is still at the heart of what this hyper local fortnightly publication does. Established in 1982 it has evolved into a community news magazine with a big digital footprint. Our aim is to inform, inspire and connect our community. It is a family-owned small business. Our team is local and love what they do.

Please follow us on Facebook @hillstohawkesbury. Printed copies are available at local shopping centres and other outlets. For a full list visit our website www.hillstohawkesbury.com.au.



Urban Sprawl Claims Riverstone Business

BY BEV JORDAN

Family and Australian-owned retail and wholesale butchers AJ Bush & Sons, is closing its Riverstone protein recovery plant after 70 years, as the once semi-rural area is transformed by new housing estates.

In February this year the company was fined \$15,000 and given an official caution for failing to appropriately store raw animal product, in breach of a condition of their Environment Protection Licence. The EPA received more than 220 odour complaints in September and October last year from residents in the surrounding suburbs.

Cameron Bush, Head of Rendering at the plant's operating company Bush's Proteins, made the closure announcement last week (16th April) saying the build-up of residential development and the impending release of land in the area for more housing made it impossible for it to operate as a business.

"It's a difficult decision for a family company to make as we've been a part of the community since the 1950s, but Riverstone is no longer a semi-rural fringe suburb," he said.

The site is set on 33 hectares.

He said the company voluntarily reduced operations in December last year over resident concerns about odours which added to financial pressures.

"In fact, aggregation of by-products alone at the Riverstone site is now costing the business up to \$100,000 per week. No family-owned business can sustain that for an extended period of time," he said. "Regrettably, about 30 plant employees will be made redundant, along with impacting some subcontractors who will lose our business after working with us for many years."

All AJ Bush's collection, aggregation and processing is being phased out and will cease by the end of May. A handful of staff

will be retained at Riverstone to manage the wind down and decommissioning of the site. The site's processing equipment will be decommissioned and removed. Some of the processing equipment may be utilised at the company's other meat by-product protein recovery plant in Beaudesert, Queensland.

The company has said it will honour all existing sponsorships with local sporting clubs, communities services and agricultural organisations.

Bush's Proteins has been collecting meat industry by-products free-of-charge from retailers and processors in Greater Sydney and NSW surrounds for many years. The company has spent almost six months looking at other business models for the collection service and not found a workable one.

The processing site became one of the first in Australia to install covered anaerobic ponds to capture biogas in the early 2000s which allowed it to convert from coal-fired boilers to natural gas and biogas. The company said Rendering has been one of the leaders in Circular Economy business models, taking animal by-products and returning protein, fats/oils and biogas back into the economy.

A spokesperson for the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) said the authority was working with the owners to ensure the site is appropriately decommissioned.

"A meeting between government and industry representatives has been set up to discuss how to best support local businesses impacted by the closure," she said.

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CHARGES OVER FATAL CRASH

The 40-year-old driver of a car that collided with a bus on the T-Way at Rouse Hill on Tuesday 9th April that left one family member dead and three injured is to face Parramatta Court on May 29th on several charges relating to the crash.

His 68-year-old father-in-law sitting in the front passenger seat died at the scene and three other passengers, his 4-year-old daughter, his wife and mother-in-law, were injured.

Emergency services were called to the intersection of Windsor Road and Sanctuary Drive, Rouse Hill, at about 7pm on Tuesday April 9th.

NSW Ambulance paramedics treated the grandfather in the car but he died at the scene. The driver, a Castle Hill man, was trapped before being released by Fire and Rescue NSW.

He was taken to Westmead Hospital in a stable condition. Three other passengers were taken to Westmead Hospital in a stable condition. It is understood that the man who died and his wife were visiting from India.

SPEEDING DRIVERS

Speeding drivers continue to be a concern with several caught recently driving at over 45km/hr over the limit. The fine is \$3,300. As the cars were not theirs the plates were not taken.

A 20-year-old P-Plate driver was fined and his licence suspended after he was caught speeding 45km/h above the 60km speed limit in Castle Hill on Sunday April 14th. Hills police detected his blue Ford Focus on Hastings Road, Castle Hill travelling at up to 119 km/hr in a sign posted 60 km/hr zone at around 1.30pm. Officers stopped the vehicle and spoke with the 20-year-old from Baulkham Hills, a P2 Provisional licence holder. He returned negative results for alcohol and drugs. He was issued an infringement notice for Exceed Speed Limit - over 45 km/h His licence was suspended for a minimum period of 6 months.

Another P2 licence holder had his licence suspended after officers from The Hills Highway Patrol clocked him travelling 58 km/hr above

The 61-year bus driver was uninjured and taken to Blacktown Hospital for mandatory testing. The bus was Out of Service and so was not carrying passengers at the time.

Officers attached to The Hills Police Area Command established a crime scene that was examined by officers from the Crash Investigation Unit.

On Tuesday 16th April the 40-year-old driver of the car presented to The Hills Police Station where he was charged with six offences:

- Dangerous driving occ death-drive manner dangerous
- Dangerous driving occ GBH-drive manner dangerous
- Cause bodily harm by misconduct, in charge of motor vehicle
- Negligent driving (occasioning death)
- Negligent driving (occasions grievous bodily harm)
- Not stop at stop line at red light

the sign-posted speed limit in Kellyville. The black Audi was seen on Green Road, Kellyville travelling up to 110 km/hr in a 60 km/hr zone at about 10.40pm on Sunday, March 31st. The 18-year-old driver from Bella Vista was fined for exceeding the Speed Limit - over 45 km/hr and "use mobile phone while driving". His NSW driver's licence was suspended and confiscated on the spot for a minimum period of six months.

A 22-year-old male from Quakers Hill had his licence suspended by police for up to six months after he was pulled over for travelling at a speed of up to 152km/h in a 100km/h zone on the M2 Motorway at Baulkham Hills.

Officers from The Hills Highway Patrol detected the blue Hyundai i30 at about 5am on Saturday, March 30th.

The driver returned negative results for alcohol and drugs. He was issued with a fine for Exceed Speed Limit - over 45 km/h.

Oakville RFS Brigade was called in and found one car rolled on its side and another with persons trapped.

The crew stabilised the vehicles and provided fire protection for the injured persons and with the help of NSW RFS Box Hill Nelson Brigade managed traffic at the busy intersection before police and paramedics arrived. Everyone involved escaped with only minor injuries.

POLICE CAR RAMMED

Officers from The Hills Police Area Command were called to a home on Marsden Avenue Kellyville at about 8.30pm on Friday, 5th April due to concerns for the welfare of a resident.

On arrival, a fully-marked NSW Police vehicle was allegedly rammed twice on the passenger side by a man driving a utility.

The Chief Inspector who was in the car suffered minor injuries; however, was able to call for urgent assistance before apprehending the man.

The 32-year-old was taken to Castle Hill Police Station where he has been charged with predatory driving; assault police (actual bodily harm); drive manner dangerous; and driver consume alcohol while driving.

The Chief Inspector was checked at the scene by NSW Ambulance paramedics before being taken to hospital for treatment.

ONE GOT AWAY

One driver was caught and one got away after police spotted two cars travelling at high speed in a suburban Baulkham Hills street.

Officers from The Hills Highway Patrol detected a P1 licence holder travelling 120 km/hr with no lights on Hilda Road at Baulkham Hills at 7.30pm on Saturday, March 30th.

Police followed two vehicles into the street which has a sign-posted speed limit of 50km/hr. Officers say they saw the rear of the two vehicles turn off their headlights and accelerate away from police. Officers continued to follow a BMW and checked the speed of the vehicle at 120km/hr.

The 17-year-old driver from Toongabbie was stopped. He returned negative results for alcohol and drugs, His NSW drivers' licence was immediately confiscated and suspended for up to six months. The number plates of the vehicle were seized and confiscated for three months. He is due before Parramatta Local Court in May for: Drive in a Manner Dangerous – First offence, P1 driver Exceed Speed Limit - over 45 kph, Drive in darkness no lights. The vehicle travelling in front of the BMW evaded officers.

SCAM ALERTS

Spam SMS can be reported to the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). The ACMA has made it easier to report spam SMS – simply forward the message to them! Their dedicated Spam SMS line is 0429 999 888; your mobile phone provider's standard billing rates will apply.

BOX HILL CRASH

Members of the Hawkesbury SES Unit were returning home from a training course and were first on scene at a multiple vehicle crash in Terry Road Box Hill on the afternoon of Monday, April 15th just before 3.30pm.

They provided immediate first aid before the arrival of paramedics at the scene where three vehicles had collided.



Photo from Oakville RFS Brigade Facebook

March for Change

By Bev Jordan

Hundreds of people are expected to take a very public stance against domestic and gender based violence by joining the Community March For Change down down Castle Street, Castle Hill on Friday, May 3rd.

Organised by a community committee it has the support of The Hills Police Area Command. The last march against violence was held along Castle St in 2018 and involved hundreds of community groups and high school students.

Hills Police Commander Supt Naomi Moore said there was no simple solution to curbing violence – “we need to work together”.

She said: “On average (each month) we are having reported to us 30 domestic assaults, 20 breaches of apprehended violence orders and around 80 other domestic-related incidents (not an assault).

“We are seeing young people involved in domestic violence - as offenders, victims and witnesses and this is of concern”.

Former Hills Mayor Michelle Byrne, one of the organisers of the Community march, said it is important to get young people involved in the march.

“Reducing DV requires a “whole of community approach” and that includes our schools ... it is crucial if we are serious about breaking down intergenerational cycles of domestic and family violence and putting an end to the increasing rates of sexual assaults. An estimated 4.2million Australian adults

have experienced, violence, emotional abuse or economic abuse by a partner... with 27% of women and 15% of men having experience violence or abuse by a partner Nothing is going to change unless as a community we push for change and a future that is free of domestic violence for all,” she said.

“I encourage everyone in the Hills to join us at the march for change and to be part of the movement to end domestic and family violence in our community. “

People are asked to meet at the entrance of the Castle Tower’s Purple Car Park in Castle Place on May 3rd. The march down Castle St will begin at 7am sharp.

At the end of the march there will be a forum for students at Castle Hill RSL who will be shown a video addressing family violence that was written by Kellyville High students and played by professional actors.

For everyone else on the march there will be a barbecue at Castle Hill Bowling Club. There is no but register by scanning the code to give an idea for catering purposes.

If you have concerns about family violence call 1800RESPECT (1800 737 732). If you are in danger call 000.

SUPT NAOMI MOORE

“Reducing domestic violence in The Hills is one of my key priorities”

“I have strategically placed staff in front line and crime prevention unit roles to review every domestic incident that is reported to police”.

“We have good support mechanisms in place for victims – my staff are very experienced, empathetic and aware of how domestic violence can impact the family home – we are here to help”

“I am committed to working with the community, government and non-government organisations to prevent, disrupt and respond to domestic violence in the Hills – there is no simple solution, we need to work together”.

“We understand the pressures that families are under – committing domestic violence will only add to your troubles – seek support and help before that happens”.



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FLOOD STORIES

Hundreds of people were evacuated, roads were closed and people rescued as flash flooding inundated already flood-weary communities along the Hawkesbury River.

The floods were the seventh Hawkesbury residents had experienced over the past four years.

Endeavour Energy emergency crews responded to widespread damage caused by the storms overnight which left 8,200 homes & businesses without power.

The NSW SES has issued evacuation orders for people living in low lying areas along the Hawkesbury River including parts of Pitt Town Bottoms, Cumberland Reach and Sackville.

The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) issued its Initial Flood Watch on Wednesday, 3rd April.

Flood waters reached Gronos Point, McGraths Hill, Richmond Lowlands, Oakville and Wisemans Ferry in the Hawkesbury and

Annangrove, Cattai, Glenorie, Lower Portland, Maraylya, and Sackville North in the Hills.

By Friday, the region saw its heaviest rainfalls, submerging infrastructure such as Richmond Bridge, Webbs Creek Ferry (West), Wisemans Ferry Road, and Yarramundi Bridge, cutting community access. The Windsor Bridge remained open amidst the flood, becoming a crucial route.

On Saturday, 6th April, Oakville Rural Fire Brigade crews were alerted of a vehicle floating in flood water on Pitt Town Road, McKenzies Creek. The Oakville RFS requested assistance from the SES to ensure no occupants were in the vehicle.

Crews from the SES Hawkesbury Unit rescued a driver trapped in his utility on Old Kurrajong Road, Richmond, on Sunday morning (pictured).

Over the weekend, parts of Agnes Banks, Cornwallis, Cattai, Ebenezer, Leets Vale, Sackville, Sackville North, and the western part of Richmond Lowlands were directed to evacuate.

The BOM released its Final Flood Warning on Tuesday, 9 April, reporting decreasing water levels in the rivers.

The SES are still assessing the total damage caused by the multi-day rain and flood event. Overall, more than 5,000 SES crews were deployed across NSW to assist in rescues, recovery, and damage assessments.

As residents started cleaning up they vented their frustration over a lack of adequate flood mitigation and lack of action on improving evacuation routes.

A group of Pitt Town residents made their concerns public saying gates along evacuation routes were locked.

The State Government has extended the waste levy waiver to 22 Local Government areas meaning residents living in the Hills Shire Council can now dispose of flood-affected items at landfill sites without incurring the waste levy fee. Hawkesbury residents were exempted earlier. The exemption covers waste on public and private land, including damaged building materials, furniture, carpet, gardening debris and any other flood-related products.

Easter Show Ribbon for Inala

Inala is celebrating success at the Easter Show with a second place and highly commended in the Open Arts and Crafts Category.

The competition, which has been running for the past 150 years and attracts nearly 5,000 entries in over 300 classes, is one of the most highly prestigious competitions in NSW.

David an exceptionally talented weaver who participates in Inala's Art Program, was awarded the second place and highly commended award.

"We are thrilled to see David receive the acknowledgement we know he deserves," said Alexandra Davis, Inala CEO.

"He has developed his weaving skills over many years and has truly become such an accomplished artist with an eye for beautiful details," she said.

The Inala day programs run out of Cherrybrook Day Service Dulkara, offer participants opportunities to develop artistic skills like weaving, pottery and painting, under the guidance of staff who themselves are artists.

"Our staff are amazing, not just supporting our participants but helping develop them into artists in their own right," she said.

David was one of five Inala artists who entered the competition and with other artists having their work sold during the Show. All are looking forward to entering again, along with other local art competitions.

"Our belief in the unique abilities and contributions of each person means we provide each person with opportunities for personal growth, creativity, skills development, independence and community involvement," said Alexandra.

Inala is planning a local exhibition in Cherrybrook for later in the year.

Everyone has a place at Inala

For nearly 70 years Inala has been providing disability services in the Cherrybrook and Castle Hill areas. Inala's programs, supports and services are focused on each individual, to give them choice to develop new skills and interests.

CEO Alexandra Davis says the staff at Inala ensure participants are not just supported but live a purposeful life.

"Whether you attend Inala through our day services or residential homes, we build our programs around the individual to allow each person to live a full and meaningful life," Mrs Davis said.

Almost 200 individuals attend Inala across five Day Service locations and 15 residential homes, many of whom have been part of the Inala community for over 40 years.

Inala is committed to ensuring that each residence is a real home in the true sense of the word. Individuals actively participate in running their homes, enjoy visits from family and friends, and engage in activities in the local community.

"To find a home at Inala means joining a very special community. We support each other, and there are many opportunities to connect, whether that is through Inala events or just visiting another home for dinner," Mrs Davis said.

With three current vacancies, there is a rare opportunity to join Inala and if you would like more information you can visit their website www.inala.org.au





The Hawkesbury City Waste Management Facility is accepting flood waste free of charge from Hawkesbury residential properties impacted by the recent floods.

Flood waste should not contain prohibited items like soil, fibro, or asbestos. Loads will be checked at the weighbridge. The Waste Facility is open to Hawkesbury Local Government Area residents from 8am to 4pm, 7 days a week (excluding public holidays). Bring proof of address such as a Driver's Licence or Rates Notice.

Charges apply for all other waste that is not flood waste and for residential properties that are not flood affected.

As both council areas were declared Natural Disaster Zones residents can access a range of State and Federal Government funding and support programs to help them recover and rebuild. Primary producers and small businesses can access concessional loans up to \$130,000, as well as transport subsidies up to \$15,000. Sporting and recreation clubs can access concessional loans up to \$12,000 and grants up to \$2000. Not-for-profit organisations can access concessional loans up to \$25,000 and freight subsidies for primary producers.

To apply for a concessional loan or primary producer grant, contact the NSW Rural Assistance Authority on 1800 678 593 or visit www.raa.nsw.gov.au. Disaster Relief Grants are also available at: <https://recovery.gov.au/NSWflood>. For support with personal hardship, emergency accommodation and distress assistance, contact Service NSW on 13 77 88.



Public Hearing – Planning Proposal LEP002/2 Reclassification of Land

1905 AND 1913 BELLS LINE OF ROAD, KURRAJONG HEIGHTS

Hawkesbury City Council is undertaking a Public Hearing in respect to a Planning Proposal for 1905 and 1913 Bells Line of Road, Kurrajong Heights (Lot 2 DP 582878, Lot 3 DP 582878). The Public Hearing is scheduled to be held on Wednesday, 1 May 2024 at 6pm.

The hearing will be chaired by Locale Consulting (independent of Council) and will be held online using the Zoom platform.

Interested persons should register with Council via the Eventbrite link <https://1905-1913proposedreclassification.eventbrite.com.au> by close of business on Friday, 26 April 2024 to:

- virtually attend or listen to the hearing
- make a submission at the hearing.

See the documents associated with the Planning Proposal and details about how to provide a submission at www.yourhawkesbury-yoursay.com.au or in person at Council's Administration Building, 366 George Street, Windsor from 9am to 4pm. It is recommended to view these documents before the hearing.

Following the public hearing, the chairperson will prepare a report on the hearing, a copy of which will be made publicly available.

For any enquiries regarding this matter, please contact Council's Strategic Planner on 4560 4444 or email enquiries to council@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au



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HAWKESBURY LIBRARY

Hawkesbury Library Service, Hawkesbury Regional Gallery and Hawkesbury Regional Museum are presenting a range of fun programs to keep the kids entertained during the Autumn school holidays. All activities are for school aged children (children under the age of 10 must be accompanied by an adult). Bookings are required for some events and some workshops do incur a small fee.

Library workshops will be held at Hawkesbury Central Library, Ground Floor, Deerubbin Centre, 300 George Street, Windsor. Bookings are essential via Eventbrite <https://hawkesburylibrary.eventbrite.com> or call 4560 4460.

Mr Bamboozle's Magical Game Show

Wednesday, 24 April 10:30am to 11:30am

This show blends storytelling with baffling magic and crazy game show fun to challenge your thinking and imagination.

For ages 5-12 years. \$5 – Bookings essential



GETTING TO KNOW YOUR CAMERA

Do you have a digital SLR camera and are not sure what to do with it? Come along to the getting to know your camera workshop on Thursday, 9 May from 7pm to 9pm.

Presented by Hawkesbury Camera club in conjunction with Hawkesbury Library Service, this informative and fun workshop will be presented by seasoned photographers.

Learn basic techniques for digital photography, how to make the most of your camera as well as ways to take more creative shots.

BYO digital SLR camera is essential.

This free workshop will be held at Hawkesbury Central Library, 300 George Street, Windsor. Bookings are essential and can be made via hawkesburylibrary.eventbrite.com or simply phone the Library on 4560 4460.



HILLS LIBRARY

Hills Library Top reads for kids these school holidays:

- The Jeweller's Apprentice by Axel Scheffler
- Sensational Australian Animals by Stephanie Owen Reeder
- Leo and Ralph by Peter Carnavas

Top reads for mums, dads, grandparents and carers these school holidays:

- Body of Lies by Sarah Bailey
- Women of Good Fortune by Sophie Wan
- The Revenge Club by Kathy Lette

The Jeweller's Apprentice is an animal fairy tale by Axel Scheffler, illustrator of *The Gruffalo*, with a heartwarming message about learning from your mistakes.

When Mr Peacock hires a shy little chicken as a new apprentice in his jewellery shop, he has no idea what awaits him: a royal visit from the Lion Prince, a mysterious robbery, and a miraculous discovery!



WHAT'S ON AT THE HILLS SHIRE LIBRARIES:

Living Stories Western Sydney Writing Prize

Entries are now open for the Living Stories Western Sydney Writing Prize, with the theme "Over the line...?". You can submit a short story, poem, or essay. Winners and highly commended entrants will receive a cash prize and have their submission published. Submissions close on May 6, 2024. Submit your entry at www.westwords.com.au/living-stories.

Hills Voices Online Podcast

The Hills Shire Library Service is releasing the Hills Voices Online oral histories series as a podcast. The latest episode features the late Ron Smith OAM, a former Castle Hill and District sub-branch vice president and naval officer, who speaks about life in Castle Hill during wartime, the development of Castle Hill RSL Club, and its ANZAC Day celebrations.



ARCADIAN QUILTING NEWS

Brrrr ... out with the knitting needles AND our woolly sox as we plan for the WINTER months ahead; it's the perfect time of year for those hand crafts of all descriptions!!

With Mother's Day just around the corner, various Charity Groups will be busy making gifts for sale. "Market Days" will be popping up throughout our local areas so get ready for some winter shopping?

Philomena Henriksson, one of our 'quilting gurus' had the perfect cuddly project in mind when she designed her Cats-in-the-

Corner quilt (see photo). Philomena, whose contribution to the Arcadian Quilters group is in many ways 'the backbone' of what we do as she machine quilts our work for the various Charity projects.

We have two wonderful members who do our quilting work and we are forever GRATEFUL to these generous ladies.



We meet on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Wednesday of every month at The Community Centre, The Glade, Galston. For further information please call Carole on 9894 7749.

Blind Author Defies Odds

BY BEV JORDAN

Les Pobjie's gripping new novel *Whispers in Empty Rooms: Death Through a Glass Darkly* is a murder mystery that he knows he will never see.

The former newspaper editor and the author of two collections of short stories and three novels started losing the sight in his right eye due to glaucoma five years ago and while surgery did slow the progress he also lost the sight in his left eye around two years ago.

The Quakers Hill father of four thought without his eyesight it would be impossible for him to write another book but the idea for *Whispers in Empty Rooms* would not leave him alone and with the help of his family he has just published the 78,000-word mystery novel.

Just like his central character he switched on a voice recorder and dictated his work over 18 months. His son Ben transcribed it and then his wife Helen and eldest daughter Rebecca read it out to him and took note of the changes he wanted to make.

His other daughters, Emily, and Alice, helped with copy editing and publishing tasks. Sister-in-law, Penny, proofread the manuscript which is now a 300-page book.

He says he is "still learning to be blind" and often doesn't know if there is anyone in the room with him and constantly has to ask if anyone is there, hence the title, *Whispers in Empty Rooms*.

While it is a murder mystery, it's also an intimate look into the life of a man, like Les himself, struggling to adjust to blindness that has struck him late in life. Published by Tellwell, it's testament to the power of the imagination to transform the darkest of circumstances into art.

At the beginning of the book, successful author George Martin's body is found hanging from a rope in his home office at his Katoomba mansion. The members of his toxic household insist it was suicide, but the police have their doubts.

Central to the investigation is Martin's last manuscript which he had composed using the voice recorder he always carried. The recorder was the repository for new pieces of writing and ideas for future stories, but also conversations, observations and humiliations he experienced in day-to-day life.

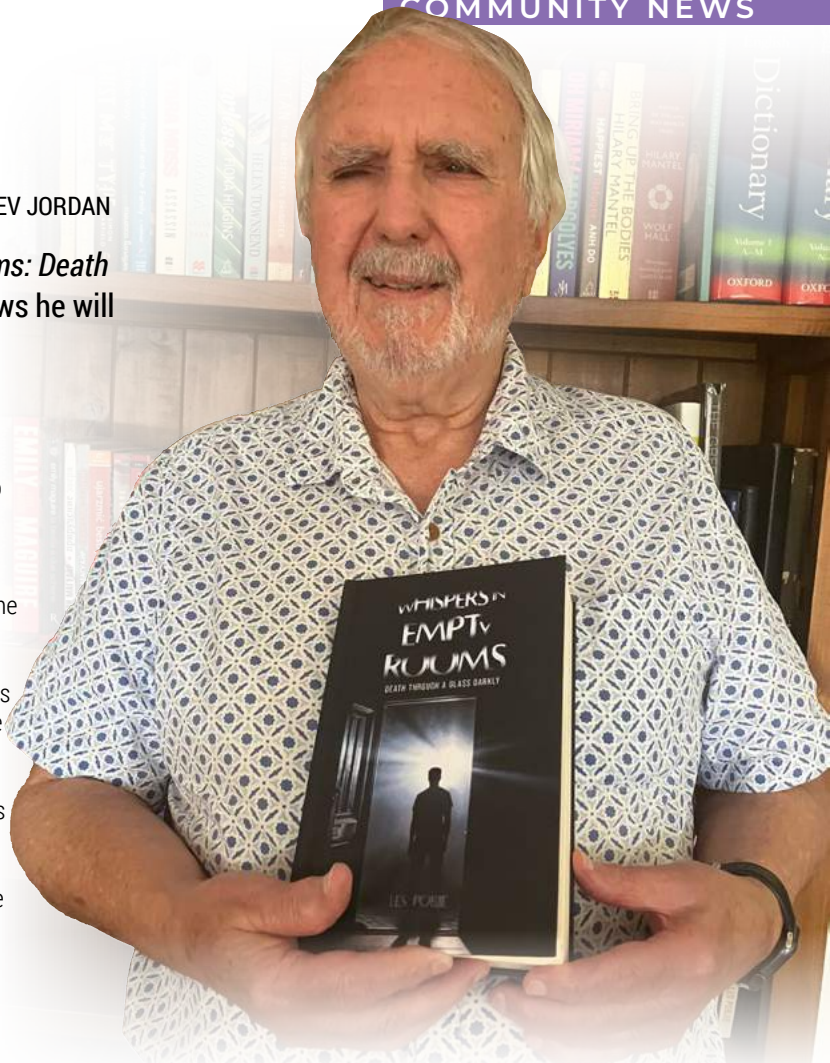
The book includes an unpunctuated manuscript transcribed from George Martin's voice recorder which is being read by one of the detectives who is frustrated by the lack of punctuation.

One excerpt reads: "I keep hearing voices in different rooms I should say I keep thinking I hear voices in different rooms if nobody answers then maybe there is nobody there but I am only blind not deaf long life meaning I wasn't born yesterday I feel alienated in what was once my lovely mansion seems to be a house of mystery..."

It's an unusual format as the novel also has eight short stories within it. Stories written by George Martin, which are quite dark but are a fascinating read.

Les says while writing it was "a long and sometimes frustrating process" he is happy with the published result: "I felt at times like giving up so now it's done, I have a great sense of achievement. It's wonderful to be able to hold a copy in my hands," he said. "Even if I can't read a single word of it myself."

The 81-year-old is now looking at other projects to help people with impaired vision. A proud grandfather, he has developed a board game, Gold Rush, that can be played by all ages and all abilities which he would like to attract backing for. He is also working on a card game and is considering another book of short stories, "possibly titled Tales from a Hermit's Cave". *Whispers in Empty Rooms* is available both in Australia and overseas and is being made into an audiobook for the Vision Australia Library. It can be ordered online through Amazon, Booktopia and Apple iBooks. There are printed copies (paperback and hard cover) as well as an ebook. Just visit the websites (booktopia.com.au or amazon.com.au) and select *Whispers in Empty Rooms: Death Through a Glass Darkly*.



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A New Promise for a New Generation

Can you imagine if there was no need for a kids' hospital because disease, accidents, illness and genetic disorders just didn't exist. You might think that this sounds like science fiction or a dream for the future. But for the sick kids of NSW this dream is getting closer with Sydney Children's Hospitals Network's two new world-class and state of the art buildings to take care of them.

Opening to the public in 2025 Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick and The Children's Hospital at Westmead redevelopments will ensure that the kids of NSW receive world-class healthcare for decades to come.

Located in the heart of the Randwick Sydney Children's Hospital, and Minderoo Children's Comprehensive Cancer Centre redevelopment project will revolutionise kids' healthcare. Research will be embedded into the fabric of the new buildings with the design specifically focussed on fostering strong collaboration between clinicians and researchers for a true bench-to bedside model.

With the demand for kids' health services growing, expectations for care are changing and The Children's Hospital at Westmead is at the forefront of this change. The new building was designed with input from hospital staff, kids and

their families. Every step of a patient's journey has been considered and includes innovative models of care. Located in one of the largest health, research, education, and training precincts in the world, The Children's Hospital at Westmead's new building will be a beacon of hope for patients and families.

Building the future for sick kids is having one foot in the present and one foot in the future, these new developments will give the kids of NSW the best fighting chance to beat disease, recover from accidents or illness and have improved outcomes from birth defects. A promise to a new generation.

As the exclusive fundraising partner to Sydney Children's Hospitals Network, donations to Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation (SCHF) continue to help achieve the goal of providing the best possible healthcare for sick

kids. We are looking for partners to be part of future redevelopments for the next generation of kids. Gifts in Wills build this future. As little as 1% in a Will can make a difference to the kids who might one day need medical support.

SCHF has partnered with Safewill, Australia's highest rated online Will writing platform. Safewill makes it quick, easy, and affordable to write your Will online. You will be able to write a Will online, and have it reviewed by Safewill's legal team to ensure it has been filled out correctly.

SCHF through Safewill is pleased to offer you the opportunity to write your online Will for \$80 (usually \$160). To learn more, contact us on 1800 770 122, plannedgiving@schf.org.au or visit www.schf.org.au/gift-in-will



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



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1800 770 122**





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With local shops, cafes, restaurants and medical facilities just a five-minute stroll away, residents can come home to a quiet village featuring stylish villas and an array of facilities.

Enjoy a relaxed social scene at the onsite community hall, café or barbecue area overlooking the bowling green. Or why not pamper yourself at the hair salon, get creative at

the carpentry workshop or show off your skills in the billiards room?

It's the residents that really make Aminya Village a home. It's a place where people care and look out for one another, and where you can feel safe, secure and supported.

For us, this is what retirement living is all about – community, belonging and togetherness. As a trusted provider since 1944, we pride ourselves on offering a holistic retirement living experience, with integrated home care services and a co-located residential aged care home for your future peace of mind.

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6 Goolgung Avenue, Baulkham Hills
Scan for more information or visit
baptistcare.org.au/aminya-village

Because we care



Volunteers hand out warm winter clothing to the homeless

Shining A Light on HOMELESSNESS

BY SOPHIE POREDOS

Over 35,000 people in NSW are currently experiencing the deliberating nature of homelessness. Whilst rough-sleepers might be the stereotypical image of homelessness you picture, it ranges from couch-surfing to temporary accommodation.

Joel Devlin from Baulkham Hills is a long-time volunteer with the charity, Shining Light Foundation which was started in 2016 by Azita Abdollahian who owned a hairdressing business in Castle Hill (Bebe's Hair and Beauty).

She wanted to offer dignity back into the lives of the homeless population through offering haircuts and headed to Martin Place.

With a passion for social work, she has gone from hairdressing to graduating with a Bachelors in Psychology.

As previous President of Norwest Sunrise Rotary Club and recipient of Women of the West Businesses Award in 2019, Azita thrives in uplifting others in her local community.

"Working closely with the homeless community has allowed me to ground myself and exercise gratitude," she said.

"Also, I learn from them. If anyone is out there and helping as a volunteer, they are doing something good for their community and themselves. Volunteering has really helped me expand my views about life and see things differently than living day by day."

The Shining Light Foundation operates most Mondays in Martin Place and offers a hot BBQ, packaged food as well as hygiene items to those in need. Occasionally they offer haircuts and clothing especially during the harsh winter

months, but always a warm conversation.

Joel steps up most Mondays to lead the Martin Place collective. Joel's advocacy for social justice is proven through the recent presentation he gave to Crestwood High School, encouraging young members of the community to step up and volunteer their time.

As President of The Hills Rotaract Club, Joel volunteers alongside new Shining Light member and Secretary for Hills Rotaract, Dani Milan.

Joel and his team thrive in social justice positions.

Joel said: "The first time I joined the Shining Light Foundation in Martin Place was in 2020 when Azita was still cutting hair. I saw how grateful people were for the hygienic product donations we were handing out and I had the time and energy to help. With the Shining Light Foundation, I managed to get people within my community to donate preloved clothes and blankets during winter."

Joel is often joined by other welcoming volunteers like Hills local and The Shining Light Foundation treasurer, Melanie Chee, who also wants to return dignity back to the homeless community;

"For me, I love volunteering for the Shining Light Foundation because what we do is give people who are less fortunate hope. For me,



Joel (pictured right), Melanie (pictured centre) and Dani (pictured left of Joel), with fellow volunteers.

I love volunteering for the Shining Light Foundation because what we do is give people who are less fortunate hope.

'Hope is important because it can make the present less difficult to bear', which is a quote by Thich Nhat Han. We like to remind people that they are not alone."

Last Christmas, I took part in writing the Christmas cards for the Shining Light Foundation, which also contained money to purchase any necessities. Events such as these are significant as our homeless community are increasingly socially isolated due to the loss of critical connections.

If you have a few spare hours on a Monday evening, join Joel and this kind-hearted community at Martin Square, Sydney CBD from 7PM onwards. Check the 'Shining Light Foundation' Facebook page for any donations that they are in need of.



Police joined in the packing process.

Packing Hope, Sharing Love

CHRG and its popular hospitality venue, Castle Hill RSL Club is well known, as being a hub for the community, but last Thursday morning (April 11th) it was transformed into a volunteer production line of community unity and compassion as it hosted the Supertee Kids Medical Garments Packing Event. Volunteers included CHRG staff, Castle Hill RSL Sub-branch, and CHRG sub clubs who came together to support the cause.

Supertee was founded by Jason Sotiris in 2018 to make hospital stays and medical treatment easier for young children by providing a fun top that enabled easy access for medical staff.

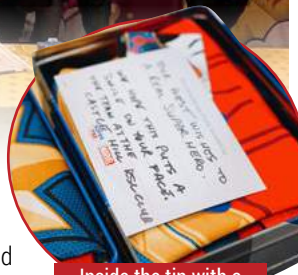
The idea came to him while his then one-year-old daughter Angela was undergoing chemotherapy in hospital.

He was observing his daughter's IV drips, heart monitors, and central lines when she woke suddenly and vomited due to the potency of her chemotherapy.

He wanted to create a garment that could be changed easily whether the patient was awake or asleep. Not only would this make life easier for nurses and parents, but it would also reduce stress for patients during difficult times.

On Thursday participants helped pack the special Supertee: Marvel Edition Tins with a Captain America or Captain Marvel Supertee, an activity booklet and stickers, character bookmark and Hero ID card, fellow Avengers secret message and a special note "From Your Biggest Fan".

The event, which kicked off early in the morning, saw a flurry of activity as volunteers of all ages gathered to pack specially designed tins and contents. Amidst the shared laughter and purpose, volunteers diligently packed the garments for distribution.



Inside the tin with a handwritten note by a volunteer.

"Supertees" are not just clothing items; they are symbols of strength, resilience, and hope for children battling illnesses.

Andy Abey, CHRG's Group Chief Operating Officer, expressed immense joy at the community's overwhelming response. "It brings us great joy to see our community come together to support such wonderful causes.

"Events like these showcase the boundless kindness and generosity within our CHRG community, and it really is an honour for us to host and continue to support Jason and the Supertee team," Andy said.

The Supertee Kids Medical Garments Packing Event not only offered practical assistance but also fostered a sense of belonging and unity within the community. Volunteers reflected on the impact of their collective efforts and the meaningful connections formed throughout the day.

"I'm proud to contribute to an event that truly makes a difference," said Cheryl Hill,

President of Castle Hill RSL sub-Branch who had some 13 volunteers at hand. "Knowing that our actions today bring comfort and joy to children in need is incredibly heartening."

Since its inception in 2018 Supertee has helped thousands of Australia's sickest children and their parents. Over \$500,000 has been donated, and more than 8,000 Supertees have been delivered so far.

If you feel inspired to support Supertee or want to learn more about the Supertee garments, visit their website at www.supertee.org.au

Anzac
LEST WE FORGET
Day

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ANZAC SERVICES

SUNDAY, April 21st

RICHMOND

The annual ANZAC Sunday march will be held in Richmond, starting at 2.30pm There will be veterans and eight Military vehicles joining the parade from World War 2 and Vietnam to current operations. The march will commence from West Market Street led by the Lighthouse and head to the War Memorial down Main Street. There will be a band, veterans, current defence force personnel, Air Cadets, Air League, descendants of veterans and other local groups taking part. The service at the War Memorial will start at 3pm.

GALSTON

A Sunday ANZAC Commemoration service will be held at the Galston Memorial Club. Attendees are asked to be seated by 2.15pm. There will be a recital by the Hills District Pipe Band and afternoon tea.

ANZAC DAWN SERVICES

THURSDAY, April 25th

CASTLE HILL

The ANZAC Dawn service held at the Centenary of ANZAC Reserve, Wrights Road, Kellyville will be professionally live streamed this year on the Castle Hill and District RSL sub-branch Facebook page and via the website.

The service will start at 6am, arrive early if you need to park as thousands attend. The ANZAC Day address will be given by Commodore Terry Morrison. Also speaking will be the four Hills ANZAC ambassadors: Anika Pandey (Baulkham Hills High), Isabelle Henderson (Northholm Grammar), Jacob Carr (Marian Catholic College) and William Go (Castle Hill High). They will talk about Gulf Wars 1 and 2.

For the livestream visit chrs.subbranch.org.au/2024ANZACday.
Facebook: facebook.com/ch.subbranch

GALSTON

The Dawn Service at the Glaston Cenotaph at 6am, organised by the Hills District RSL Sub-branch Chapter. Former Hills ANZAC ambassador and former army cadet Krishi Raghupathi will talk about women in war.

GLENORIE

6am Dawn Service held at Glenorie Memorial Cenotaph, Old Northern Rd.

RICHMOND

The Dawn Service will be held in front of Richmond War Memorial in Richmond Park. The community is invited to attend by 4.45am for a 5am start.

RIVERSTONE

There will be a march and service starting at 5.30am to Riverstone War Memorial in Riverstone Parade by the Station.

WISEMANS FERRY

The 6am Dawn Service will be held at Wisemans Ferry War Memorial on Old Northern Road followed by a light breakfast at Wisemans Ferry Bowling Club.

WINDSOR

Windsor and District RSL Sub-branch is holding its Dawn service at McQuade Park Windsor. Arrive before 5.50am. The service is expected to take at least an hour.

2024 ANZAC SERVICES IN GALSTON

21st April, 2.30PM

ANZAC SUNDAY COMMEMORATION SERVICE AT THE GALSTON MEMORIAL CLUB

Attendees are asked to be seated by 2.15PM to receive the marchers who are to assemble in the foyer of the Club by 2.10PM. There will be a recital by the Hills District Pipe Band, following the service in the Galston Club. Afternoon tea will be available.

25th April, ANZAC Day, 6AM

DAWN SERVICE AT THE GALSTON CENOTAPH

A limited number of sheltered seats will be available.

Lest We Forget

**Bill Rosier OAM, Coordinator
Hills District RSL sub-Branch Chapter
M.: 0432 847 137**

ANZAC SERVICES LATER IN THE DAY

KENTHURST

Rotary Club of Kenthurst is organising a march along Nelson Road at 8am followed by a service in the John Benyon Rotary Park at 8am. Morning Tea is provided.

PITT TOWN

Organisers of the Pitt Town ANZAC service hope the 9am service will be one of their biggest. It will take place in front of the Pitt Town Honour Rolls. There will be road closures in place between 7.30am and 11.30am on the day.

GLENORIE

An ANZAC afternoon march and service will be held at the Glenorie RSL Memorial 3 Post Office Road, Glenorie. The afternoon service at 3.15pm will be followed an afternoon tea at the Glenorie RSL Sub Branch and will feature the Hills District Pipe Band.

RICHMOND

Western Sydney University Hawkesbury Campus will be holding an ANZAC Day Service at the Hawkesbury Campus (Bourke St, Richmond) on Thursday 25th April. Guests are asked to assemble at 10am at the front gates at Bourke Street – College Drive. The march will commence at 10:30am. There will be an official service at 11am followed by refreshments.

WILBERFORCE

Wilberforce Park 9am to 10am

A Veteran's Story BY BEV JORDAN

David Hand was 16 years old when he joined the Royal Australian Navy.

The teenager from Bundaberg started an apprenticeship at TAFE in fitting machines in early 1987 where he filled out a form to join the Navy _ six weeks later received a letter saying thank you for your application here is your ticket to Brisbane.

There were aptitude and physical tests to undergo in Brisbane before he was given a four year apprenticeship with training at HMAS Nirimba at Quakers Hill.

"My parents were happy for me. I was 16 coming from a small country town to Sydney in winter ... I did think, what am I doing here?"

He was in RAN for ten years which saw him deployed to several countries including the Middle East during the Gulf War I.

"I found there was a big wide world out there."

His first deployment was on HMAS Brisbane to Auckland. "I got so sick they were very big seas. There were 310 crew all up and 70 plus in the engineering department. It was 24/7 and you just learnt to tolerate people."

He went to sea on the Hobart and Perth as well as Brisbane with deployments taking him to Southeast Asia and South Pacific Islands.

The Leading Seaman Marine technician served on the Brisbane during the Gulf War 190/1991 while it escorted tankers through

the conflict zone, conducted anti-aircraft screening protecting the US aircraft carriers and performed search and rescue duties.

He says his Naval service has made him resilient, more tolerant and able to come up with quick solutions.

"If you break down at sea you have to solve the problem, you have to improvise."

He said the plus side was also getting paid to learn new skills and travel.

"You get to see a lot of good places, there is incredible camaraderie and friendships. I don't regret signing up."

He says on ANZAC day he thinks about fellow crew members, and those whose lives have been lost.

David has been a Castle Hill RSL sub-branch member for 32 years and is now a CHRG director.

"To me the RSL Sub-branch is about supporting veterans who don't know what support is available and also about bringing back (that sense of) camaraderie.

"When I left the Navy there wasn't any knowledge of what support services were available and how to transition from a military mindset to civilian mindset and that has changed a lot of that has been because of work by Rsl Sub-branches."



David Hand



Bob Hawke with David Hand on the Brisbane's return from the Gulf

Anzac Day

Anzac Day is a time for reflection, remembrance, and gratitude. It serves as a tribute to the courage and companionship displayed by our soldiers in the face of adversity. It also honours the enduring ANZAC spirit, characterised by qualities like mateship, endurance, and loyalty.



Beyond its historical roots, Anzac Day has evolved into a national day of unity and pride. It unites communities to honour veterans, commemorate fallen heroes, and recognise the ongoing contributions of our defence forces.

This year, in collaboration with the Rooty Hill RSL Sub-branch and Legacy, Pinegrove Memorial Park will host their annual Anzac Day Dawn Service on Thursday, April 25th, starting at 5:30 am.

After the service, enjoy a BBQ breakfast and entertainment. Additionally, the Rooty Hill Sub-branch will hold a service at 10:30am, followed by Two Up in the Ambassador Room at West HQ from 12pm to 4pm.

For those unable to attend in person, tune in to a live radio broadcast on SWR FM Radio or watch the livestream via Pinegrove Memorial Parks Facebook page.

Let's unite as a community to honour our heroes and express gratitude for their sacrifices.



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

ANZAC SERVICES 2024
RICHMOND WAR MEMORIAL

ANZAC SUNDAY MARCH
SUNDAY 21st APRIL 2024 | 2:30PM

The local community is invited to support the District's past and serving military personnel, as well as their descendants and local community groups, as they march to the Richmond War Memorial and to then participate in the official commemoration service and laying of wreaths.

ANZAC DAY DAWN SERVICE
THURSDAY 25th APRIL 2024 | 4:45AM

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

For additional information about the ANZAC Day commemorations and the laying of wreaths, please contact the Richmond RSL Sub-branch Secretary, Gillian Fletcher on 0438 782 419 or the Publicity Officer, Lynette Bowles, on (02) 4578 2804.



Lest we forget
— ANZAC DAY —

BEST PARKS

With school holidays in full swing (excuse the pun). We asked local councils about top parks in the area and have come up with a list of ten in both the Hills Shire Council and Hawkesbury City Council areas. They are worth a visit. They are not in order of rank.

THE HILLS LGA

Livvi's Place at Bernie Mullane Reserve, Kellyville

The all-abilities playground includes a water play area, rope climb, tunnel, sensory musical play equipment, a basket swing, mini-trampolines, and so much more. It is also fully fenced, with wide and accessible pathways, making it easier for those wanting to use the recreational facility.



Bella Vista Farm Park, Bella Vista

Bella Vista Farm Park, Bella Vista

Bella Vista Farm Park includes a children's playground with a tower and spiral slide, a junior curved slide, rope climbs, a whirly-goround, an infant and strap swing set, and a bird's nest swing that is accessible to all. Additionally, a footpath connects to the wider Farm pathway network, and there are picnic shelters and barbecues available. These modern amenities seamlessly blend with the culturally significant elements of The Farm, which has been in existence since the late 1700s. The Farm includes a fully restored two-storey homestead, a Bunya Pine-lined driveway, and various farm buildings situated on a prominent hilltop.

Castle Hill Heritage Park, Castle Hill

Castle Hill Heritage Park offers the perfect blend of history, fun, and natural beauty. The park features an expansive picnic area with a children's playground, shelters, barbecues, tables, and seating—all perfect for hosting a picnic.

Turkeys Nest Recreational Park, Beaumont Hills

This park is a favourite among families and nature enthusiasts alike. It offers views of the bushland and provides ample space for various recreational activities, such as picnicking, walking along tracks, and enjoying the pond. It's the perfect spot to relax and have a good time.

Crestwood Reserve, Baulkham Hills

This park is an excellent destination for families to enjoy. Its expansive green space is perfect for outdoor activities, and there are amenities for picnics, such as tables and barbecues. Additionally, there are two playgrounds for children, as well as a learn-to-ride bike track, which are great places for kids to play. The park also has pathways that are perfect for biking and walking.

Continues on page 28



Castle Hill Heritage Park, Castle Hill

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Celebrate Connections to our Heritage at Bella Vista Farm

Sunday, 5th May 9.00am-3.00pm

Sunday 5th May 2024 is an auspicious day for Bella Vista Farm. It is **Heritage Open Day** with the theme **Connections**.

In 1842, when William Thomas Pearce purchased around 200 hectares from Isabella Acres, Bella Vista Farm's construction began. Today, with a connection to one of our volunteers, Mark Pearce, a direct descendent of William Thomas Pearce, we see the well-preserved building standing proudly overlooking Seven Hills and far beyond. Even though there are bustling suburbs now surrounding the property, the farmhouse still maintains its grace and historical identity.

Meet our volunteers dressed in heritage costume; take an informative tour through the house and outbuildings and hear about the early settlers; enjoy the famous Devonshire Teas in a peaceful garden setting; be entertained by serene music performed by members of the Hills Shire Symphony Orchestra and Hills Harmony Chorus.

The Trash and Treasure Stall has become a huge drawcard at the farm, with all sorts of goodies to discover, including gardening tools along with a plant stall adjacent to the tantalizing sausage sizzle/onions stall – who can resist?

Meet our sheep - see their wool being spun. There are displays of beautiful linen, lace and chinaware in the house. Children are not forgotten with lots of fun and games, some dating back to the 19th century.

There is so much to see and enjoy, we know you will have a fascinating day and come away with more knowledge about the early days of Australian farm life.

When: Sunday, 5th May – 9.00am – 3.00pm

Where: Corner of Norwest Boulevard and Elizabeth Macarthur Drive, Bella Vista.

Free Parking is provided.

If you can't make our next Open Day, our farmhouse is open the first Sunday of each month from 9.00am – 2.00pm. You will always receive a warm welcome. Check on the Hills Shire Council website for more details - www.thehills.nsw.gov.au



Bella Vista Farm | Corner of Elizabeth MacArthur Drive and Norwest Boulevard



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*VISITORS \$19 | NOT AVAILABLE ON PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

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*Grove Square - The Hills stores only. Four (4) winners drawn on Wednesday 8 May 2024. Entry forms available from eligible stores. Attach valid docket to entry form or keep safe and show if you win. You can enter as many times as you like, but you can only win once during the competition period. Full terms and conditions available on the website.

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THE BENEFITS OF WEARING YOUR HEARING AIDS ALL DAY:

Making Your Hearing Better with Ear Studio

At Ear Studio, our dedicated and highly skilled team is committed to helping our clients make the most out of their hearing devices. In this article, we will explore 3 key benefits of wearing your hearing aids all day, highlighting how it can significantly enhance your overall hearing and well-being.

1. Improving Communication

Much of our daily communication involves hearing. From talking to your family members and friends, to an interaction at the shops, or speaking to a health professional. Some of them may be more important than others. Of course, you will want to understand advice or warnings extended to you from your doctor or other professionals. Yet sometimes it is a little interaction you may share with others that have the potential to make you smile and can make a difference to your day.

2. Improve Your Connections with Others

Connections with your loved ones grow over time and, like plants, benefit from regular attention. Being able to have a meaningful conversation is part of that. Ensuring you can join in during events, big and small, lets you be part of the action. Social connections are not only what warm our hearts, they also ensure that the opposites are kept at bay. Social isolation, frustration, and sadness can be results of an inability to hear and understand well.

3. Help Maintain Cognitive Functions

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

Hearing aids can therefore bring benefits in different parts of your life. It is important to point out that these positive factors will only come into play if your hearing devices are worn daily, ideally for most of the day. Only then will your brain continue to receive auditory stimulation and stay active. The longer your

3 BENEFITS OF WEARING YOUR HEARING AIDS ALL DAY



brain remains deprived of this stimulation, the more work you will have to put in to achieve your maximum outcome.

At Ear Studio, we believe in the positive change improved hearing can bring to you. If you (or a loved one) would like to explore any of these aspects, please take the time to call us today. You can contact our friendly reception staff on 02) 9159 6122 or via email at reception@earstudio.com.au. We are happy to help find a time that is suitable for you. We are open Monday to Thursday from 9am to 5pm and Fridays from 9am to 4pm and are located at Lawton House in Castle Hill (Suites 9-10 / 60 Cecil Ave). We look forward to guiding you on the journey to better hearing.

Have You Stopped Wearing Your Hearing Aids?

At Ear Studio we understand that there are many reasons why you may have stopped wearing your hearing aids. Please take the time to read our article above explaining 3 benefits of wearing your hearing devices all day. Our highly skilled team at Ear Studio are here to assist you and help you hear well again - Call us today to book in your consultation.



Let us help you become part of the conversation again
02 9159 6122

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Located inside Lawton House
Suite 9-10 / 60 Cecil Ave, Castle Hill

Sensory Garden Blooms

BY BEV JORDAN

Thousands of specially selected plants and shrubs are currently being planted in a special area at Balcombe Heights Estate in Baulkham Hills to create a sensory garden for the community.

The Balcombe Heights Sensory Garden has been a labour of love for Connie Keith on the estate's governing committee who chased Federal and State Government Grants to obtain grants to make the dream blossom.

The soil turning ceremony on the grassed area near Woodbury Autism Education and Research on April 11th saw Federal Member Mitchell Alex Hawke join State MP for Castle Hill Mark Hodges and Hills Shire Mayor Peter Gangemi for the official soil turning by Connie Keith and Mici Beer from the Balcombe Heights Estate management committee.

A smoking ceremony and Welcome to Country conducted by Peter Williams from Muru Mittigar Aboriginal Cultural and Education Centre.



Andrew Hewitt and Tig Crowe with Connie Keith in front of plans for the sensory garden

Connie Keith thanked landscaper Tig Crowley for coming up with the concept plans and working pro bono for two years during COVID. She also thanked Andrew Hewitt Ryde TAFE who was consulted about the sensory garden and Michael Edgar, General Manager with Hills Shire Council.

Tig Crowley said: "The project is about the community and also creating social and ecological awareness. It will be an enormous plus to the (Balcombe Heights) Estate."

He said a huge variety of plants will be used to create the sensory garden with a mix of native and exotics. The garden will include all-ability walking paths, Indigenous symbols, and something for all senses, sound, smell, sight, and touch and should be completed by the end of August.

"This is an amazing venue," he said.

The land where Balcombe Heights Estate is now was a former farm before being bought and turned into an orphanage and school by the Freemasons in November 1922 for children of Masons who had lost their lives serving their country in World War I. The land was bought by council in 1977 for use by the community.

Connie Keith said the original plants on this estate were planted with advice from Sydney Botanic Garden. She said talks about a community garden area started in 2019 to best utilise the ground and the idea for a sensory garden came to bloom because the Estate



Mayor Peter Gangemi, Connie Keith, Mark Hodges MP and Mici Beer

contained so many services with clients who would benefit from such a space.

In 2022 a Federal Government Federal Government grant provided \$20,000 towards a tree lined path to a war memorial at Balcombe Heights and a bigger grant of \$627,464 from the State Government's Western Sydney Infrastructure Grants Program has enabled the blossoming idea to flower, she said.

Hills Shire Mayor Peter Gangemi thanked Connie for her "dedication and passion" to make the garden a reality.

"It's been a long road to get here," he said.

"We are very excited for what this garden will bring to the community," he said. "We have made the site all about the community ... this garden will really take the site to the next level."

Andrew Hewitt Ryde TAFE said: "It's a good indication of how plants can have an impact on everyone. Through consultation and a good design process you guarantee to meet the needs of the public."

Plantings will include Japanese maple, dwarf Sydney Red Gum, palms, banksia, lemon myrtle, flowering gums, figs, frangipani, fruit trees, tibouchina and Lilly Pilly, saltbush, lilies, sage, kangaroo paw and herbs.

Decluttering: Your shortcut to peace

In today's fast-paced world, it's not uncommon for homes to become cluttered with items that no longer serve a purpose, making spaces feel chaotic and cramped.

The Home Crew Concierge Services offers a premier solution to this problem, helping families and individuals reclaim the peace and space of their homes. Clutter often accumulates because we hold onto items due to emotional attachments or the belief they might be useful someday, leading to unnecessary accumulation and overwhelmed living spaces.



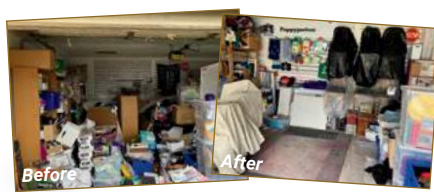
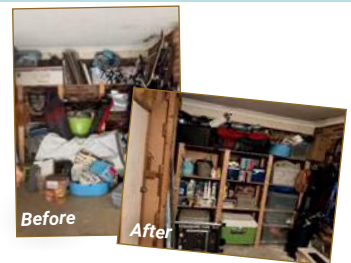
The key to reducing clutter is two-fold: mindful purchasing and regular decluttering. By only bringing items into the home that enhance life and regularly assessing

belongings, spaces can remain reflective of current lifestyles and needs. The Home Crew specialises in assisting clients to make conscious decisions about what to keep, donate, or discard, providing personalised organisation solutions that fit individual preferences and lifestyles. Whether you're downsizing or simply aiming to maintain a tidy home, they offer the support

needed to ensure every item serves a purpose or brings joy.

This Mother's Day, consider giving the gift of a beautiful organised space—a thoughtful and impactful way to show appreciation. A decluttered space not only looks more inviting but also promotes a sense of calm and well-being. Helping someone declutter her home, or hiring professional services like The Home Crew, can significantly enhance her daily living experience. It's a unique gift that not only acknowledges the hard work mothers do to maintain their homes but also provides them with a serene environment where they

can relax and enjoy their time. Such a gift will be remembered and appreciated far beyond any traditional present, making this Mother's Day truly special.



Transform your home into the serene and organised space it's meant to be with The Home Crew Concierge Services. Begin your journey to a clutter-free home. Contact The Home Crew Concierge Services today.

HILLS TO HAWKESBURY READERS GET 15% OFF their first decluttering service by mentioning this article.

0406 231 422 | concierge@thehomecrew.com.au | www.thehomecrew.com.au



out and about

with **MICHELLE BYRNE**

School Holiday Fun

With the second week of the school holidays upon us, the challenge of finding ways to occupy and entertain children that doesn't include hours on screens whilst not sending you broke in the process becomes harder.

However, there are plenty of free or low-cost events for families to enjoy together in the next week or so. Below is a few suggestions of activities and things to get you started and I am sure you will find even more to do beyond this list.

Castle Hill RSL

As part of ANZAC Day commemorations, Castle Hill RSL are running a ANZAC Craft Day for children 5 to 12 on Tuesday 23 April. Tickets are \$5 and includes craft, a showbag, ANZAC cookies and popper. To book go to bit.ly/3PXFm3h

Castle Towers

From 22-28 April (excluding ANZAC Day) there is an opportunity for children to create and assemble banana bite sundaes for free. No booking is required for this activity which runs from 10am to 2pm daily on Level 2, opposite David Jones.

Winston Hills Mall

Next week (excluding ANZAC Day) children can participate in Super hero craft and make their own superhero masks and capes for their own super adventures. This activity is free and will run 10am to 1pm outside BigW. No booking is required.

Rouse Hill Town Centre

The April Family Fun Fair is running daily from 11am to 6pm daily until April 29. The Fun Fair, located along Main Street includes rides, games and food trucks. Entry to the Fair is free and you can pay for ride tickets individually or purchase a 3 hour unlimited rides pass for \$25 online. For more information go to www.rhtc.com.au/what-s-happening/april-family-fun-fair

Grove Square, Baulkham Hills

A free paper flower making workshop will be held on Monday 22 and Tuesday 23 April from 10am – 2pm in front of Red Dollar. This activity is suitable for all ages and is free. No bookings required.

Kellyville Village

Kellyville Village is running ANZAC Day Holiday Heroes -Paint with Mates Workshop from Friday 19 April to Tuesday 23 April. There are 3 sessions per day: 10-11am (5-8 years), 11:30am – 12:30pm (5-8 years) and 1-2pm (9-12 years). There is no cost but bookings are essential. For more information go to www.kellyvillevillage.com.au/whatson/school-holidays-entertainment/



The Hawkesbury Show

Run by the Hawkesbury District Agricultural Association, the Hawkesbury Show is one of the largest regional Agricultural shows in the State and one of the biggest events in Western Sydney. This year the show runs from 19 April to 21 April at Clarendon Racecourse and has plenty of entertainment, animal/agricultural displays, wood chops, lego displays, rides, fireworks and so much more for all the family to enjoy. For more information including ticket prices and inclusions go to www.hawkesburyshowground.com.au/show/hawkesbury-show

Beyond these activities there is still plenty to do including visiting local art galleries and museums in the Hills and Hawkesbury and exploring local parks and reserves. We hope you enjoy the rest of the school holidays, out and about in the Hills and Hawkesbury.



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Children's Forest opening at Fagan Park

BY SOPHIE POREDOS

Fagan Park in Galston has been transformed with its new section, 'The Children's forest', an interactive and nature-based play area, dedicated towards building responsible stewardship.



Hornsby Shire Mayor Philip Ruddock (R-L) Stephen Bali MP and Matt Kean MP cut the ribbon with Hornsby Shire Councillors at Fagan Park Children's Forest.

New South Wales' first 'Children's Forest' was officially opened on the 11th of April 2024 and is now welcomed to the general public to experience the educational model. Through an interactive space, children can engage with educational discovery pods, timber animal interactions, an outdoor learning space, a Yarning Circle and a pond with stepping stones.

Joined on the day by Arcadia Public School and Galston Public School, the Children's Park was created in close consultation with five local schools of what a children's forest should look like. Project planner for Hornsby council, Meredith Paterson recounted the process;

"It was a very collaborative and immersive experience for the children and asked them, 'What do you think a children's forest would look like? What's important to you and we got the most amazing ideas like flying foxes and treehouses. Being a local resident and having that relationship with the local community and students was brilliant".

The aim of the new playground is to build a sense of connection to nature for children. Situated in Hornsby's largest parkland of over 55 hectares, the NSW government funded this project as well as the Fagan family who donated the land.

"Nurture children's relationship with the natural world and showcase the value of trees."

Uncle Neil Evans, a GuriNgai Custodian, performed a beautiful smoking ceremony and Welcome to Country, celebrating children's stewardship of the natural environment and paying respect to the traditional Dharug and GuriNgai ancestors of the land.

Hornsby Mayor, Hon Phillip Ruddock AO, also expressed his ambitions for the project to: "Nurture children's relationship with the natural world and showcase the value of trees.", also adding, "I thank the students from each of our schools, I hope you get a good interactive session and we look forward to children utilising this space".

Stephen Bali MP, who appeared on behalf of the Hon Paul Scully MP (Minister Planning and Public Space) was inspired by this project as, "This facility sets the benchmark for the rest of NSW to follow".

Bring your young ones and experience the new magic of the Children's Forest at Fagan Park, 38-48 Arcadia Rd, Galston NSW 2159. Fagan Park doesn't require a ticket for entry, except for vehicle parking and is open everyday 7am until 5.30pm (or 6.30pm during daylight saving).



Fagan Park: Children from Galston Public School play on the stepping stones at the official opening of Fagan Park Children's Forest.

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Call Tanya on
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Orchids Out West 2024

17th-19th May, 2024
9.00am - 4.00pm Friday and Saturday
9.00am - 2.00pm Sunday

Hawkesbury Showground, Racecourse Rd, Clarendon
(Opposite Richmond RAAF Base)

• Adults: \$10.00 • Buses: \$8.00
• Children under 15 yrs: Free

Orchid Displays - Plants for Sale
Free growing advice - Plenty of free parking
Sausage sizzle and light refreshments available

Enquiries 0408 264 040

<https://orchidsocietynsw.com.au/orchids-out-west-2024/>

Vendors

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The Hills Shire Council News

HAVE your say 



Draft 2024-2025 Hills Shire Plan on public exhibition

The Draft Hills Shire Plan is now available for you to have your say.

The Hills Shire Council plans to use the five-part document as a framework to achieve the strategic objectives outlined in the Hills Future throughout the upcoming financial year.

The Plan includes several projects funded by both Council and the State Government (through grant funding), which will include both the construction of new parks, playgrounds and reserves, as well as the maintenance and renewal of existing assets across the Hills.

Head to Council's community engagement platform hillshaveyoursay.thehills.nsw.gov.au to have your say today.

Fox Baiting Program

Please be advised that the regional fox baiting program will be undertaken at local reserves in the Sydney North Region. The aim of the project is to protect native wildlife including threatened species from fox predation.

1080 poison baits will be laid in the following Reserves managed by The Hills Shire Council:

Excelsior Reserve, Ted Horwood Reserve, Eric Mobbs Reserve

Cats and dogs must NOT enter these baited reserves during the following dates:

Monday 6 May 2024 – Friday 21 June 2024

It is vital that pet owners take extra precautions to ensure that their pets do not enter these reserves during the dates stated. Penalties up to \$1,100 apply under the Local Government Act (1993) Sect 632 (2) (d).

Dogs on leads can return to these reserves on Saturday 22 June 2024.

Annual Community Grants



Council's 2024/25 Annual Community Grants will open on 22 April 2024. The program, reserved for community groups, provides funding between \$2,501 and \$25,000.

The program focuses on providing grants for community services in four main priority areas:

- Events, concerts, theatre, and arts programs designed to engage key community members that entertain the broader community
- Domestic violence prevention and recovery
- Mental health and suicide prevention
- Disability, youth, seniors, and cultural projects that support community participation opportunities.

Training session registrations are now available to provide information and assistance to applicants. Visit Council's website and search 'grants' to find out more.

The fox control program will involve the use of "Foxoff® Econobait" poison baits that are designed specifically for fox control. Poison baits contain 1080 (sodium monofluoroacetate). Baits will be buried to reduce the risk of non-target poisoning. Warning signs will be displayed to notify the public about the program.



WARNING
1080 poison is lethal to Cats and Dogs.

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



Help Shape Arts & Culture in the Hills

Share your thoughts on arts and culture to help The Hills Shire Council develop a new Arts and Culture Strategy.

Council is working on its 2024 Arts and Culture Strategy, which will investigate a range of options that could transform cultural life in the Hills, including:

- Market demand and feasibility for a large new multi-purpose venue
- Viability of a permanent concert stage at Bella Vista Farm
- Council's role in curating major events, exhibitions and performances at a range of Council venues including the Showground, Bella Vista Farm and Pioneer Theatre
- Opportunities for public art and laneway revitalisation

Have your say now by heading to **hillshaveyoursay.thehills.nsw.gov.au** or scan the QR code above to fill out the Arts and Culture Strategy Survey.

Anyone who participates in the survey and signs up to the new Hills Have Your Say platform is eligible to go into the running for one of five \$100 vouchers. The survey will be open until 11:59pm Friday 7 June 2024.

Council Meetings

Tuesday 23 April 2024 at 7pm

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

Write away for your chance to win

Entries are now open for the Living Stories Western Sydney Writing Prize, proudly presented by WestWords in collaboration with WestLit Libraries and supported by The Hills Shire Council.

This year's theme 'Over the line...?', challenges participants to explore boundaries, question norms, and venture into uncharted territories of their imagination. Entries can be submitted as a short story, poem, or essay.

The four winners and four highly commended entrants from each Western Sydney LGA will have their submissions published and receive a cash prize.

Submissions close at midnight on Monday 6 May 2024. To learn more and submit your entry, visit: www.westwords.com.au/living-stories



Are you enjoying
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Scan the QR code to let us know.



THE HILLS
Sydney's Garden Shire

GRAEME GOULD

'Sketching a Portrait Live' (pencils)

Art Demonstration Wednesday, 1st May, 2024 - 7.30pm

Graduating from the National Art School with a five-year diploma in Design and Craft in the early sixties, Graeme's design career encompassed store design in Sydney and London, television set design for the BBC and the ABC, plus graphic and costume design.

From 2000 Graeme took on the challenge of figure and portrait drawing by attending local sketch clubs and joined the Castle Hill Art Society. He returned to the National Art School and now draws and models at many groups. He also helps coordinate Sunday life drawing at the RAS.

Speed and spontaneity are the essence of his drawings, mainly using charcoal, pastels, pastel pencils and often his fingers for smudging. His interests and inspirations include the sweep of the horizon, the perfection of the square, Athenian vase paintings, Aubrey Beardsley, Matisse, Japanese prints, recycling (found object d'art sculptures), equality and art in all its manifestations.

For this demonstration Graeme's intention is to lead you to your own way of discovering portraiture.



On Saturday 1st June at 2.00pm there is an art demonstration by Bob Gurney: "Secrets of impressionistic painting with water mixable oils".

Visitors are welcome to join with the Castle Hill Art Society 7.30pm at Castle Glen Community Centre, 157 Ridgecrop Drive, Castle Hill. Enquiries: 9899 3179 www.castlehillartsociety.org.au



ARCHIBALD PRIZE

If you missed seeing the Archibald Prize exhibition at the Art Gallery of NSW last year or you want to see it again you can.

Hawkesbury Regional Gallery

15 March - 28 April 2024

An Art Gallery of New South Wales touring exhibition **Art Gallery NSW**



The Archibald Prize 2023 is showing at the Hawkesbury Regional Gallery until Sunday, 28th April, when the Gallery will open for extended hours with an exhibition program including artist talks. It is an exciting opportunity to be a part of the regional tour – the last time it was exhibited in the Hawkesbury was in 2017.

The 2023 Archibald Prize attracted an incredible 949 entries. From these 57 finalists were selected and for the first time ever, there were more works by women (30) than men (27) selected as finalists with significant representation of First Nations artists.

The Archibald Prize is Australia's foremost portraiture prize. Awarded to the best portrait 'preferentially of some man or woman distinguished in arts, letters, science or politics, painted by any artist resident in Australasia', the Archibald Prize is a who's who of Australian culture, from politicians and celebrities to sporting heroes and artists.

The first Archibald Prize was awarded in 1921 to artist William Beckwith (Billy) McInnes.

The 2023 winner was Julia Gutman with her work *Head in the sky, feet on the ground* which

features singer Montaigne. The People's Choice Award went to Jaq Grantford's portrait of actor, writer and director Noni Hazlehurst called *Through the window* (pictured).

In an exciting local twist, visitors to Hawkesbury Regional Gallery will have their own opportunity to vote for their favourite in the Hawkesbury's People's Choice Award.

The Hawkesbury Young Archie portrait competition will also run in 2024 which will be a fantastic exhibition of young creative talent. Follow the Gallery's Facebook www.facebook.com/hawkesburygallery. Find out more about each of this year's Archibald Prize finalists at www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/prizes/archibald/2023

The Hawkesbury Regional Gallery is on the top floor of the Deerubbin Centre, 300 George Street, Windsor.

It is normally open six days a week, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 10am-4pm. Saturday-Sunday 10am-3pm. But there will be extended hours during the Archibald Exhibition.



Jaq Grantford's portrait of Noni Hazlehurst *Through the window*.



Kaylene Whiskey - *Cooking my famous Indulkana soup*

"An extremely good place to be"

Stella, aged 87



Aged care that's personal

Stella moved to Australia in the 60's from the north of England and now calls The Donald Coburn Centre home. A fully converted Aussie, Stella's favourite food is none other than our beloved meat pie but she still refuses to embrace beetroot and avoids it whenever possible. In Stella's words, "I do like being with friends and enjoy the entertainment. It's just a jolly thing to do". Stella goes on to say "I'm very grateful to be here, the staff are all very friendly, very helpful. This is an extremely good place to be." Scan the QR code to hear more of Stella's story and to meet some of the other wonderful residents.



The Donald Coburn Centre
15 Blue Gums Way, Castle Hill
1300 111 278
anglicare.org.au/tdcc



Anglicare

BEST PARKS

From page 16

Balcombe Heights Estate, Baulkham Hills

Balcombe Heights Estate is a beautiful location that boasts many fascinating historic elements throughout its vast estate. Some of these elements include the heritage buildings, the memorial tree avenue of Brush Box, which was planted in memory of soldiers lost during World War I, the sundial and memorial garden. You'll also find several amenities such as barbecue and picnic facilities, a playground that is currently being upgraded, an off-leash dog-fenced area, and a skate park.

Stargazing Park, The Gables

Get ready to blast off into a world of adventure at the space-themed Stargazing park in The Gables. This exciting park features a children's playground with a spaceship, a rocket-shaped flying fox, shade coverings designed to look like UFOs, and extra-terrestrial sites with alien footprints.

Hannaford Avenue Reserve, Box Hill

Hannaford Avenue Reserve, located in Box Hill, was opened to the public in May 2022. The Reserve features a children's playground that includes a climbing unit with a slide, a swing set, and other equipment designed specifically for children. Additionally, the Reserve provides a picnic shelter, tables, and seating area where visitors can relax and enjoy the outdoors. There's also a turf-ed open space that locals can use for outdoor activities or picnics.

McGilvray Reserve, Rouse Hill

McGilvray Place Reserve has recently been upgraded and now features a variety of new facilities, including a multi-play unit with a slide, double compact swing, inclusive rocker, and climbing equipment. This area is an ideal location for families to spend quality time together while participating in outdoor activities. The playground area has numerous seats and shaded spots, thanks to the abundance of trees surrounding it.

Wisemans Ferry Park, Wisemans Ferry

Wisemans Ferry Park is located on the banks of the Hawkesbury River, offering an ideal spot to unwind and enjoy a peaceful picnic with your loved ones. The park provides numerous picnic tables and barbecues, a children's playground with swings, balance beams, stepping stones and a slide, and plenty of shaded areas to relax under.



Wisemans Ferry Park,
Wisemans Ferry



Ham Common,
Richmond

HAWKESBURY LGA

Colonial Reserve, Bligh Park

The playground at Colonial Reserve was opened in 2022 using a design chosen by the community. It includes climbing equipment, early childhood play zone, an accessible carousel, a metal hammock swing, a springer and rotating and swinging play equipment.

Ham Common, Richmond

Ham Common has a 2.5 kilometre long walk/cycleway near the Richmond RAAF Base and has a skate park for keen scooters and skateboarders. The fully fenced children's playground even has its own airplane. There is exercise equipment located along the pathway plus picnic shelters and electric barbecues. There are public toilets too. It is also the site of the Hawkesbury Visitor Information Centre with a cafe next door.

Peel Park North Richmond

Peel Park is boarded by Redbank Creek and is a popular space to take a light bushwalk. The park was refurbished in 2023 and hosts a fenced-in playground for the smaller ones and a skate park. The park is dog-friendly and provides a fenced-off area. It has shelters and public toilets. There is disabled access to the main park area.

Wilberforce Park, Wilberforce

This historic park was originally established by Lachlan Macquarie in 1810. There are a few covered picnic tables on the lower side but no toilets. The park boasts large leafy mature trees, and you will find seating with covered shelters, there is also a children's playground. The park is adjacent to the historic Macquarie Schoolhouse (1819) and the St John's Anglican Church (1859).

Ivy Avenue Reserve at McGraths Hill

Hawkesbury City Council has just created a \$143,000 playspace at this park, replacing the outdated and aging play equipment. The playspace features swings, a hammock swing, climbing fort with slide, spiderweb climbing net, spinner and rocker.

Pugh's Lagoon, located in Smith Par, Richmond

The picturesque lagoon has grassy banks and mature trees. The park is a peaceful recreation space where you can stop for a picnic, try a little fishing and the bird watching is also good.

Pugh's lagoon is considered an ecological wetland, and it is home to many plant and bird species, you will see ducks, swamp hens, and swans. The park offers adequate parking, excellent barbecue facilities and toilets to make your picnic comfortable.

Riverside Parks, Windsor

Macquarie Park is one of the parks near the banks of the Hawkesbury River. It lies on the northern bank and faces both the Deerubbin and the Howe Parks. It has a playground, electric barbecues, public toilets, and shelters. The area is also accessible to people with disability. Governor Phillip Park is on the southern side of the river. It offers sheltered picnic areas, toilets, and electric barbecues. It has a children's playground and a large public boat ramp at one end.

Pound Paddock, Richmond

This is an off-leash area for dogs. There is a sensory garden with herbs and fruit trees plus equipment that produces sounds when touched.

St Albans Reserve

The reserve is beside the Macdonald River and opposite the historic Settlers Arms Inn. The reserve has toilets, a wood barbecue, a playground and shelters. The playground was refurbished in 2023. The reserve also provides easy access to the sandy banks of the Macdonald River.

Bowen Mountain Park

The park has tall shady trees, generous grassy areas plus views of the city skyline. It is a great park for families as the playground has current equipment with soft fall ground coverings with slippery dips, swings, climbing gear and see-saw. The play area is shaded by mature trees. Bowen Mountain also has some bushwalks nearby. There are picnic tables and electric barbecue facilities. Toilets are also available.



Wilberforce Park,
Wilberforce

"I love my gardens"

Carrie, aged 92



Aged care that's personal

Carrie is an absolute green thumb who brought her passion for gardening with her when she moved into The Donald Coburn Centre a few years ago. "I do love my gardens" says Carrie, "Half the things that are up there are cuttings from my own garden". A beloved member of the Anglicare community, Carrie hates to sit around doing nothing and can often be found playing with The Donald Coburn Centre's resident cat, Duchess or mingling with the staff and her friends. "They've shown me love in just about every way they can. This is my home." Scan the QR code to hear more of Carrie's story and to meet some of the other wonderful residents.



The Donald Coburn Centre

15 Blue Gums Way, Castle Hill

1300 111 278

anglicare.org.au/tdcc



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PETS OF THE WEEK

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



AT A GLANCE

NAME: BALOO
SEX: Male
BREED: Great Dane
AGE: 1 yr 3 mos
PRICE: \$49

BALOO is on the hunt for his new home. Staff at the Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter, say Baloo is an active, fun boy to be around and has a great personality. Staff say Baloo walks well on the lead and will sit when asked. They also say he has a gorgeous winning smile. If you are interested in adopting Baloo please visit the shelter with your family. His adoption price has been reduced to \$49. The adoption price includes the first vaccination, microchipping, desexing and life-time council registration.

Hawkesbury Council's Rehoming Organisation Number is: R251000145



AT A GLANCE

NAME: SPENNY
SEX: Male
BREED: American Staffordshire Terrier
AGE: 5 yrs 1 mo
PRICE: \$49

SPENNY is a beautiful boy who just loves to chill out on his bed next to you according to staff at the Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter. They say Spenny would be best suited as the only dog in the household as he does get a little bit jealous if he is not getting all the attention. If you feel you can give this chunky boy the loving home he deserves please visit the shelter and meet him. His adoption price has been reduced to \$49. The adoption price includes the first vaccination, microchipping, desexing and life-time council registration.

Hawkesbury Council's Rehoming Organisation Number is: R251000145.

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We look forward to welcoming you and your furry family members soon!

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Savvy Second Hand Shopping

BY SOPHIE POREDOS

April is Earth Month so Sophie, our invaluable intern, decided to accept the challenge and show people how to reduce waste by supporting local Op-Shops and second-hand stores.

She wanted to see what \$20 could buy her across The Hills and The Hawkesbury region. These are the results.

In Australia the average person purchases about 27 kg of clothing per year. As shocking as that number is, consider how much this adds up nationally: about 350,000 tonnes of textile waste per year. With excess consumption of fast-fashion accelerating the effects of climate change, reusing and repurposing garments is a sure way to reverse our impact. This Earth Month in April, make the switch from fast fashion to these affordable organisations who give back to our community through their incredible work across homeless and mental health support.

ANGLICARE OP-SHOP CASTLE TOWERS

Tucked away in Castle Towers is a community hub that offers vintage fashion, toys and second-hand homewares at a fraction of the regular price. Anglicare Op-Shop is a treasure trove of preloved goods and is currently stocked up on the recent fashion trends for young people.

Through shopping at Anglicare Op-Shop, you are also supporting Anglicare's youth programs and funding for their community pantry, as all goods are bought from a food bank. Other initiatives Anglicare provides is electricity bill support as well as petrol vouchers for those doing it tough.

The lovely team at Anglicare can connect customers with Anglicare support services in

the local area, especially concerning mental health support and food or financial advice. Lisa Grzunov, the store manager at Castle Hill, Rouse Hill and other stores, expresses why she fell in love with volunteering:

"We serve the people, with good quality clothing at a low price. Other local Anglicare stores have a community pantry for affordable goods to uplift those in need. We are even just here for a chat, as sometimes people have those days where they need someone to talk to. "Everyone is welcome here".

Although the Anglicare at Castle Towers is a small store they are accepting donations of clothing and bric-a-brac (but no electrical).

Come by and make some new connections at Level 3, Store 446 at Castle Towers at 6-14 Castle Street, Castle Hill. Anglicare has over 26 retail locations across Sydney and the Blue Mountains including the newly opened Anglicare Op-Shop Rouse Hill and Anglicare Op-Shop Richmond.



Anglicare: A cute polka dot frill dress and a pair of golden bedazzled sandals for under \$20.



Just in time for Mother's Day the Salvo's store roundup for \$20. Self-care mantra cards, pomegranate soy wick candle, rose bath salts and rose diffuser, as well as a pack of shower steamers, for an ultimate care package.

SALVOS STORE MCGRATHS HILL

The newly opened Salvos Store at McGraths Hill is a new addition to the Op-Shop Market. It opened in September last year and is hidden away on Industry Road. Don't be fooled by the industrial buildings beside it, inside Salvos McGraths is a warm and welcoming shop filled to the brim with hand-selected goodies such as toys, books, clothing and new items. Its modern and trendy environment aims to transform the narrative of what an 'Op-Shop' looks like with bold and bright signage displayed.

The Salvation Army is an International Christian-based charity with a range of services including Aged Care, Employment Plus, Youth Services and their 'Salvos Stores'. Salvos' Op-Shops' give back to the community through investing all profits back into their community service. In 2023, Salvos' programs distributed over 1.63 million meals, which is reflected in the store as they have a small community pantry at the entrance.

The incredibly bubbly store manager, Lauren Austin, is well-informed about her products and is caring about her regulars, who often pop by weekly. Compassion is at the forefront of her approach to her work as she believes Op-Shops' give back to the community;

"Op-Shops' are a cheaper alternative, we get donations from the community for some great things including brand-new items with price tags. There's just such a variety, our kids' clothing is \$1, which you can't really get anywhere else. It's part of the circular economy as well, we are trying to reduce waste."

At the moment, they're running a 'Donate for a Discount' program until the end of July, giving donors a 20% off voucher in store for their Winter donations. The store always accepts donations in-store and are particularly looking for toys and clothes over the school holidays.

However, Lauren advocates for donors to practise 'Donor Care'; "If you wouldn't give it to a family member, then an Op-Shop might not be able to sell it". She also advises against dumping outside of the store trading hours as dumped donations cost Salvo's stores approximately \$8million in removal annually. Visit Lauren and her fun team at 32 Industry Road, Vineyard NSW 2765. Other Salvo's Shop locations include Salvo's Richmond at 27 Windsor Street Richmond.



LIFELINE SHOP CASTLE HILL

Another hidden gem at Castle Towers, the Lifeline Shop offers a bright and bubbly environment filled with homewares, quality second hand garments and lots of books to browse.

Situated on Level 2 next to Katie's and nearby Cotton-On, this Lifeline Shop is tucked away and offers a relaxing experience from the hustle and bustle at Castle Towers. This store in particular paid great attention to detail, from its clear signs and to the alphabetization of its extensive DVD and book range.

At the moment, brown and pink highlighted items are 25% off and blue highlighted tags are 50% off, creating a very affordable destination.

However, Lifeline doesn't just offer savvy deals. Purchases in store fund critical counselling services such as the Suicide Prevention Hotline. Lifeline Shops' also support programs for people affected by suicide and ongoing suicide prevention.

The team at Lifeline Castle Hill are incredibly friendly and down to earth as Store Manager, Margaret Templeton, who expressed her love for working at this Op-Shop;

"Op-Shops' offer people the chance to get more expensive items. For example, bigger families can come here and get branded items or toys which their kids are always after. Our Op-Shop also brings the community together from people donating and people buying. Our new store allows this especially, as there's easy access to public transport like the metro and buses".

At the moment, the Castle Hill branch is looking for book, DVD, kids toys and handbag donations (though no furniture due to space constrictions). If you have some spare hours, they're always welcoming new volunteers to serve the community and bring some joy into the lives of others.



Spoiled for choice at Lifeline, but for \$20 you can get a Groovy 70s Princess Highway dress, beautiful fairy plate (which I bought) and a sweet porcelain bear.

Recently moving from its Victoria Avenue location, you can now find the Lifeline store on level 2, Shop 302 at Castle Towers at 6-14 Castle Street.

SAVE THE CHILDREN VINEYARD

Around the corner from Salvo's is this newly opened warehouse Op-Shop in McGraths Hill offering a wide range of affordable clothing and a great selection of kids toys. It only opened four weeks ago but word of mouth has brought hordes of people to this hidden gem.

The pricing here was standardised across everything, with amazing deals such as tops and bottoms for \$5 each, as well as dresses and jackets for \$7. There was a great selection of men's and women's clothing, including a few pairs of corduroy pants I was eyeing, as well as a variety of reduced vinyl records for only \$2.

Save The Children is Australia's largest aid and development agency dedicated for the wellbeing of children internationally. Funds raised in store are allocated towards their emergency and humanitarian relief programs and Australia's leading child right's organisation; '54 reasons', named after the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Beautiful and kind staff members, Jodie the warehouse manager and Bernice, bring a fun and welcoming energy to the store. Their welcoming and bubbly attitudes are reflective of the Hawkesbury community, as they truly

want to help every person that walks into their store. Ian Moore, NSW State Retail Manager for Save the Children believes that Op-Shops' are a fundamental part of the community;

"Op-Shops' are an important space for the local community, especially for our customers and valued volunteers, as they can connect and shop sustainably while supporting a worthy cause. Funds raised through the sale of donated items in our Op-Shop support our lifesaving programs in Australia and overseas, helping kids when they need it most".

As a fairly new store, still awaiting their grand opening ceremony, they would love your donations and would encourage people to find out what donations they are accepting by calling (02) 8202 0439.

Peruse the wide variety of clothing racks at Save the Children at 11 Rob Place, Vineyard.



In their groovy change-room (decorated with Vinyls as pictured), here is a full men's outfit for under \$20: Pale yellow button up shirt paired with dark-denim jeans, doc-marten look-alike boots and a simple belt.





Nina Martelli and local weekly resident Bob Segerstrom, who always stops by for a chat. (Photo on left)

SAVVY SECOND HAND SHOPPING *continued*

NINAS PRELOVED GOODS

On the corner of George Street in South Windsor, you'll find a charming and old-fashioned second hand shop, brimming with vintage items, books and hidden gems. Nina's Preloved Goods focuses on promoting sustainability and reducing waste, through repurposing and regifting books, furniture and clothing starting from just \$2. Nina advocates against our current culture of disposable consumption, wanting to give things "a second and third life as not everything has to go to landfill".

But for many of the local residents, Nina Martelli and her store offers more than a second-hand shopping experience. Nina's Preloved Goods, acts as a beacon of hope for her local community, connecting residents with support services and offering an open ear.

"It's my own personal business. My shop is a magical little place where people are welcome to come to have a chat to check in, cry and receive a hug".

Nina's dedication to her community extends beyond the doors of her shop. Her tenacity and compassion shines through her list of volunteering services such as supporting local residents affected by the 2020 floods and even participating in the first Clean Up Australia Day in thirty years.

Nina touches the lives of all her residents, who visit from Texas NSW, Western Australia and even London. Everyone here is made to feel like family.

Nina is passionate about revitalising tourism in the Hawkesbury region, believing that

there are so many wonderful women-owned businesses in the area who desperately need support from visitors. With declining tourism, Nina has ambitions for those from the Hills Shire Council to experience the magic of the Hawkesbury, whose natural beauty and serene getaway experience is worth making the trek.

Whether you're in search of a unique decor piece or simply craving a friendly chat over a cup of tea, Nina's Preloved Goods is the place for you. You can drop in at 483 George Street in South

Windsor or check out her Facebook where she regularly updates new promotions and community partnerships.

VINNIES STORES

Unfortunately we were able to visit the numerous Vinnies Op Shops in the area but there are a lot of them offering a range of great bargains from homewares and clothes to some furniture and china as well as books and CDs and more.

Local Vinnies Locations are at: Vinnies Rouse Hill at 13/40 Panmure St.

Vinnie's Baulkham Hills at 9a/9B Old Northern Rd. Vinnies Dural (at Round Corner) Vinnies Richmond, Vinnies Windsor and Vinnies Pennant Hills. Currently, they are welcoming donations of clothing, bric-a-brac and kids toys.

Make the switch to Op-Shops' and you might just find your forever piece!

BROMELIAD Autumn Show

Sat 4 and Sun 5 May at Castle Hill Showground, Castle Hill

The Bromeliad Autumn Show will be held at the Federation Pavilion, Castle Hill Showground on Saturday, 4th May between 9am-4pm and Sunday 5th May between 10am-3pm.

Exquisite and rare bromeliads from local, interstate growers and collectors will be on display and for sale to the public including Tillandsia expert Chris Larsen with many of his rare and unusual plants. Glenorie respected grower Allan Beard, as will Jan and Jon Townsend, from Bonville near Coffs Harbour with their large colourful Bromeliads.

"If you're looking for plants that are colourful, drought tolerant and very low maintenance or a bromeliad enthusiast there is something for everyone at our show. If you've never been to a bromeliad show come along and appreciate the wonderful world of bromeliads." said Ian Hook, President, BSA.

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

There will be a display of the Bromeliad Show competition winners.

There is plenty of parking on site, admission is free to the show and please bring a box for your purchases.

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



Photo of Allan Beard in his beautiful bromeliad garden at Glenorie

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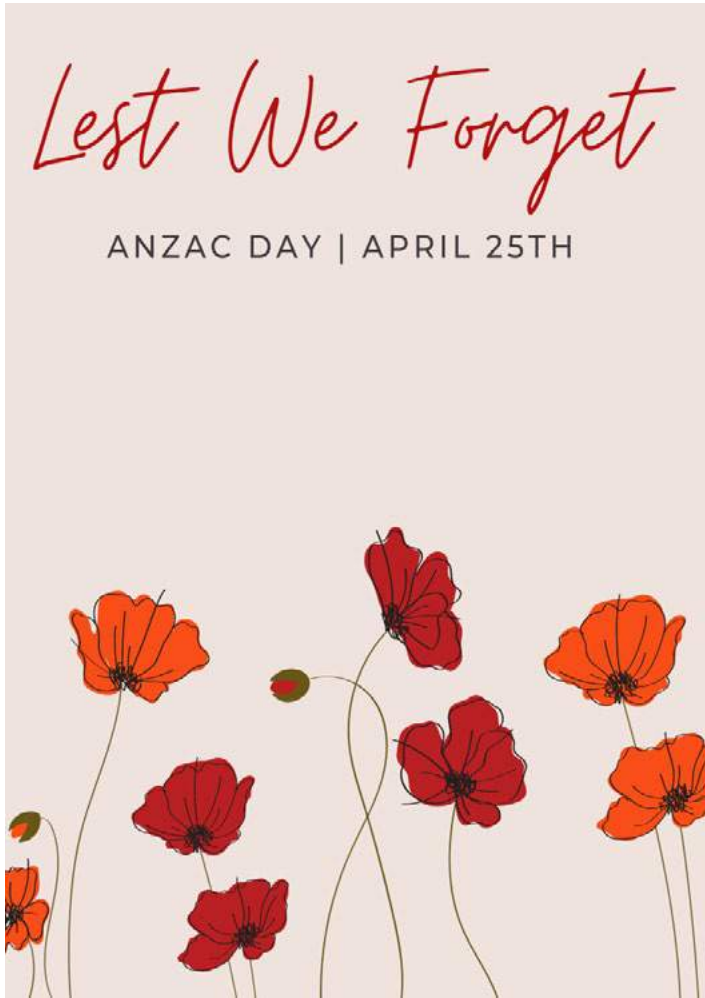
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ANZAC Day

April 25th is one of the most important dates in the Australian calendar.

This date marks the anniversary of the landing of Australian and New Zealand forces on the shores of Gallipoli, Turkey in 1915 during the First World War. Now, 109 years later, we continue to remember those brave soldiers who fought and who sacrificed their lives for their country.

ANZAC Day gives us time and space to reflect and honour those who have sacrificed and those who have and who continue to fight for our freedom. Our soldiers truly embody the Australian ideals of endurance, courage, and mateship. From the first military action of Australian and New Zealand troops during WWI and in every war and conflict since, we remember and we thank those who have fought bravely for our countries.

ANZAC DAY 2024

The original ANZACs forged the Anzac spirit of service and mateship in World War One on the shores of Gallipoli.



Since that time, hundreds of thousands of Australians have served our country across dozens of conflicts and peacekeeping missions.

On Anzac Day we reflect on the service of veterans, many of whom made the supreme sacrifice far too young. We also honour the more than 80,000 Australians who are currently serving our country in the Australian Defence Force, either full-time or as reservists.

This Anzac Day marks the first since we lost two remarkable young men who grew up in our area – Lieutenant Maxwell Nugent and Warrant Officer Class Two Joseph Laycock, who died tragically during a training exercise in July last year, alongside two of their fellow servicemen.

Those young men died serving our country. They did so as men who were duty-driven, noble-minded, and brave. They will be remembered not just for their sacrifice, but for who they were – bright, warm, talented, family-minded young men.

When I pause for a moment of silence on Anzac Day, I will be keeping Lt Maxwell Nugent and WO2 Joseph Laycock, and their families in my thoughts. I hope that you will do the same.

I strongly encourage you and your family to attend one of the Anzac Day services which will be held across our community on 25 April. It is an important opportunity to pay tribute to current serving members, veterans, those who have since passed away, and their families.

Lest we forget.



As your Federal Member, I am here to:

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➡ Assist with accessing Federal Government services

➡ Attend your local community event

➡ Arrange congratulatory messages

Please contact my office if I can be of assistance.



JULIAN LEESER MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR BEROWRA

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Flood Insurance Inquiry Seeking Hawkesbury Voices.

Last month's flood was another reminder that in the Hawkesbury we live on a floodplain. Large areas of rural land suffered badly however only a small number of homes were inundated.

For me there are many policy issues that are not yet properly addressed around flood.

The first is insurance – this once again highlights how vital it is that insurance for our region be more accessible and affordable. And even when people have insurance, having a claim for flooding is often far from a smooth process.

That's why a Parliamentary Inquiry I am part of is holding hearings in the Hawkesbury on Thursday 9 May, to hear the local experience of flood insurance.

The Inquiry is looking into insurers' responses to the 2022 major floods claims, however it also covers issues of uninsurance and unaffordability. We've been collecting evidence from insurers, consumer advocates and now it's time to hear directly from home and business owners

It's clear that the current insurance arrangements are not serving flood-prone communities like ours. The Hawkesbury has a unique perspective, given the multiple floods over recent years and I want to make sure our views are heard.

For people who made claims during 2022, the claims timeframes, obstacles to resolving claims, as well as the experiences of policyholders before,

during and after making claims are all relevant to the Inquiry's work when we report back to Parliament later this year. Many people did have insurance in 2020 and 2021, but not in 2022 - you are all welcome to give evidence.

Part of the hearing will be for residents and businesses to make a short public statement, sharing their experience of insurance in the Hawkesbury publicly. I'm a member of this Committee myself, so I'll be there. The location of the hearing will be released shortly.

If you're interested in attending or being a witness at the hearing contact me at susan.templeman.mp@aph.gov.au

More information about the inquiry is available at www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Economics/FloodInsuranceInquiry or simply google "Flood insurance inquiry".

ANZAC DAY 2024 WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

For over a century Australians have fought in conflict and peace operations around the world, protecting values of freedom and democracy. Our national spirit of remembrance has found a home on Anzac Day which marks that brave and fateful moment in 1915 when 16,000 Australian and New Zealand troops landed half a world away, on the shores of Gallipoli. That spirit was replicated on the Western Front and subsequent conflicts such as World War II, the Korean and Vietnam wars, Afghanistan, and our global peacekeeping missions.

This year marks the 80th Anniversary of what many consider was the turning point of World War II, D-Day. Hundreds of Australians were on the ground as waves of Allied troops landed on the shores of Normandy to commence the liberation of Western Europe,

while thousands more Australians were in skies above providing vital air cover.

This year also marks significant anniversaries for our peacekeeping and humanitarian work in Rwanda and East Timor; and we celebrate the advancement of women through our defence force and the role they have played in securing our nation, our region and our values. To all those who have served our nation: their sacrifice is why Australia has the freedoms we all enjoy today; and why we have our sovereignty. Many words are associated with Australians at war and on peacekeeping missions: bravery, camaraderie, mateship, service, loyalty, honour, heroes and heroines. But there is one common word - one goal - that brings them all together: peace.

This Anzac Day we remember and give thanks for the service of all those who have fought for our freedoms; and we give thanks for all those serving our country today.

Please consider attending a local service.

- The ANZAC Day Dawn Service hosted by the Castle Hill & District RSL Sub-Branch will be held at Centenary of ANZAC Reserve, Wrights Road, Castle Hill commencing at 6am.

The Dawn Service will be livestreamed for those who are unable to attend.

Type into your browser: www.chrslsubbranch.org.au/2024anzacday

- The Hills Club is hosting the ANZAC Day Commemoration Luncheon and Wreath laying Ceremony from 12:30pm at 6-18 Jenner Street, Baulkham Hills.

To learn more about the Anzacs, please visit www.anzacportal.dva.gov.au

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- ✓ Attending your local community event
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Authorised by Alex Hawke MP, Liberal Party of Australia, 8/23 Terminus Street, Castle Hill NSW 2154.

Classy Jenneke books Paris Olympics spot

Popular Hills 100m hurdling star Michelle Jenneke is off to her second Olympics, eight years after her debut Games in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil.

Jenneke secured her Paris berth after retaining her national title in Adelaide last Sunday with a terrific mid-race burst. The win took some toll on her, though, because she lay flat on the ground for several minutes after her win.

"I've been feeling in really good shape but I came down with a cold 10 days ago, which wasn't the best," the Paris-bound ace told the Wide World Of Sports after her victory. "I've just been telling myself all week, 'It's only 100 metres' ... I am honestly elated with what I was able to put together today."

Jenneke, who shuttles between Sydney and the Gold Coast, is studying engineering (mechatronics) and is a former Cherrybrook Athletics star. She said she has always focussed on her athletics.

"Honestly, I've always been running-focused.... You see people in the media and you think, 'Oh, they're doing lots of stuff', but media commitments actually don't take a lot of time," Jenneke said.

"I've never ever missed a session or anything like that for any media commitments. As far as I'm concerned, just because I might

not be out in public, it hasn't really changed my approach to training at all."

Jenneke is planning to train in Europe a month before the Paris Games which will be held from July 26 to August 11.

Her selection underlines her stature as one of Australia's best hurdlers on the short distance since making her debut at the 2010 Youth Olympics. At 30, she is one of the seasoned members of the large Australian contingent at the Paris Games, having made her first senior representation at the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

Since that event, Jenneke has the enviable record of representing Australia every year except for the Covid years of 2020 and 2021. While she is famous for her sexy dance moves before her events, she is a genuine challenger at the highest level, with her performance at the 2023 World Championships, where she made the semifinals again, a testimony to her determination to compete against the best.

Currently, she is probably at the peak of her form, with 10 of her fastest times nailed during the last two years. Last year, Jenneke was in



Michelle Jenneke gets her ticket to the Paris Olympics.
Picture: Courtesy Facebook

scintillating form, with 14 sub-13 second times, making her one of the fastest in Australia.

Jenneke has a huge following on social media with more than a million followers on Facebook alone.

Dural ace Wade plays for Futsalroos

Wade Giovenali, who plays for Dural Warriors FC, is representing Australia at the AFC Futsal Asian Cup in Thailand. The tournament is currently underway with the first four finishers qualifying for the FIFA Futsal World Cup in Uzbekistan from September 14-October 6. The Futsalroos, as the Australian side is known, last qualified for the World Cup in 2016.

They are in Group B with Uzbekistan, Iraq and Saudi Arabia and will need to be at their best to qualify from this pack.

The highly-experienced Giovenali told The Inner Sanctum site that Australia have to be on their best to beat their Asian rivals at the competition.

"It's just trying to match the intensity, the quality, and just concentrating for 40 minutes of the game," Giovenali said. "We can't lapse any second. We give them half a chance, these Asian countries, they're all professional players, they're going to hit the target and we can't take that risk."

Giovenali started his Futsal career with Castle Hill United and also represents Hills United in the FNSW Men's NPL. Along with his elder brother Greg, Wade has been an integral part of both Dural and the Australian Futsal team for years. Greg has since left the sport.

The top four finishers at the AFC Futsal Asian Cup will qualify for the FIFA Futsal World Cup which will be held in Uzbekistan from September 14 -and October 6, 2024.

Hills men fade in the second half

Hills United FC coach Luke Casserly said his side had a poor second half against NSW Spirit FC in their NPL first grade clash.

The Hills side lost 3-1 at Christie Park over the weekend, after a 1-1 scoreline at half-time. The loss pushes Hills United down the ladder in their debut season in the highest NPL grade. They lie 12th on the table with three wins from 10 matches, winning just one from their last five games.

"I thought we were quite good in the first half, we had some good moments and controlled moments of the game," a disappointed Casserly said. "But from the first whistle of the second half, we were second best. Second to everything and they were first to every ball. We invited a lot of pressure on ourselves."

Sunday Yona had equalised for the Hills side just before the break, with a superb finish after Okubo had lobbed the ball over the defence.

The Hills side are away to St George FC on Saturday, April 20, at Rockdale, kick off: 7pm.



Neil is consistency Champion

Neil Mansfield won the Dural Bowling Club's consistency final on Tuesday, April 9, with Barry Fisher finishing runner-up. The final score was 122 points to 118.



Neil Mansfield and Barry Fisher.

Three teams of four players are currently playing in the district Pennants competitions. The game on Saturday, April 6, was postponed due to heavy rain. A team representing the ladies is playing in the North West Challenge and have started well by winning their first game against West Pennant Hills.

Meanwhile, the Dural Bowlers have been showcasing the new uniforms in the current competitions. The standard uniforms have replaced the old uniforms to be consistent with being one association after the amalgamation of the men's and ladies' clubs. Anyone interested in playing bowls or having a Barefoot Bowls Party, please contact Robert on 0411 375 580.



The Dural Bowling Club women's team beat West Pennant Hills.

ISABELLA SCIBERRAS helped Hills United FC



Isabella Sciberras helped Hills United FC share the spoils in their 2023 grand final rematch against St George FC to stay at the top of the FNSW League One Women's First Grade.

Sciberras scored on the stroke of halftime to cancel a strike by Kyla Vanderlaan in the 19th minute as the sides fought out a 1-1 draw at the Bella Vista Public School ground. Alix Roberts was denied by the bar twice during the second half as the Hills looked for the winner.

Despite the draw, the unbeaten Hills United stay on top of the competition on 17 points with five wins and two draws, followed by Bankstown City FC (16). Hills also lead the club championship with 87 points, with St George FC second on 69.

Kaylie Shannon (six) and Sciberras (five) are among the leading goalscorers for the table toppers, giving them a potent attack. They are well supported by Aisling Davidson and Bella Donaldson, who have three goals apiece.

Hills United take on Blacktown City FC in the match of the round on Sunday, April 21, at Landen Stadium at 4pm. The match will be live streamed on the Football NSW YouTube page.

HARMONY AT ALIVE

BY LEONIE DIXON

At Alive's celebration of Harmony Day, we took the opportunity to invite all our members and friends to come along to the station and enjoy the day.

Rosie Ruzica Chmielewski organised the entertainment and food through the many cultures that now embrace Alive 90.5 and call it home. Rosie had a big contingent present to serve up delicious Croatian food but there was a lot of competition about what could be determined the best food. Was it the Italian Bolognese or the Vietnamese spring rolls? I just know everything I tried was delicious. Johan Rahman provided entertainment with his one-man band and Tarisai Vushe sang beautifully. Mayor Peter Gangemi enjoyed himself, as did the other 50 + people present. At Alive we believe in celebrating as often as

we can bringing fun into all our lives. It really is a situation where so many Cultures work amicably together. Go to our website alive905.com.au where you can get the details of when we are broadcasting in the language you understand. You can choose from Mandarin, African, Dharug, Hindi, Vietnamese, Spanish, Bengali, Samoan, Croatian, or Malay. Now there's variety for you. Cultural shows contain news and events from that specific country along with music and interviews from their community. If you feel a bit isolated why not become a member and come along to make new friends.



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PART 2

Growing Up 100 Years Ago In The Depression

Continuing from the last issue of the “Hills to Hawkesbury” here are some more memories of Mary “Poppy” Heiler of growing up 100 years ago in Peak Hill. In this instalment Mary writes about her teenage years.

“Later in my teens, the coach for Australian girls’ cricket teams to play against England offered me a place, but the war spoilt that.

I learnt to play tennis up against a brick wall and then eliminated the seeded player in women’s hardcourt championship.

My brother and I learnt to “pole vault” with poles cut from saplings. Each afternoon we went to “The Common” to fetch our cow, we jumped the bushes each day trying a taller one. I jumped 4’6” over home made jumping bars in the backyard. All this without cost for tuition and lots and lots of fun and pleasant competition.

On the summer evenings, all the children from “our end” gathered on the side of the wide street to play cricket, tennis, hopscotch, hop-step-jump and broadjump. I bet we could have given the highly trained sportsmen of today a good run.

Jobs and money were nearly as scarce as the proverbial “hen’s teeth” but there was no lack in community caring and “helps” for each other. The sharing and “do unto others” syndromes were a natural characteristic.

I understand the “tramps” who continually passed through town, had signs on fences showing where there were houses, not on local dole, who could help. My mother was such a kind gracious lady, always ready and willing to

help with a mead, to fill a billy with tea, provide warm water, soap and towel for a freshener, fruit and vegetables from our garden and milk from our cow.

Our family was very blessed and never in need as my father was fully employed as a manager at “Howards” local store, but we were taught to share our time and resources, never expecting any reward. My mother was always aware of the needs of others where there was sickness, a new baby, sorrow and I was the messenger with hot soup, meals or whatever was needed. As well. I would take messages to other members of the family or church when people were old or sick. We (my brother and I) would collect eggs or bring their cow home with ours and milk it.

The joy of it all was to be able to help others for the love of it, to “go the extra mile” as Christ asked us to do for His sake and not for monetary reward.

Our car was the only one in the north-end of town, if anyone had to be taken to hospital or the doctor or family emergency, even to Dubbo Base Hospital, every one knew who to contact – my father.

Children walked, rode or came in sulkies for miles to school. The horse yard was a regular feature of “bush schools”. Children spent a lot of their lunch hour feeding and watering the

horses.

One boy was so used to handling snakes on his way to school I remember him calmly grabbing the tail of a large snake as it was disappearing into a vent under the school, pulling it out and cracking it like a whip to kill it.

I often wonder how our domestic pets kept so healthy and lived so long. Just on our scraps. No money for fancy foods or injections etc.

Nothing was wasted. Flour bags became pillow slips and tea towels. Sugar bags – aprons and mats. Towels, when they became worn, were cut up for washers; best parts of worn sheets for pillow slips or made into sanitary pads or bandages. Worn tablecloths became serviettes especially for school lunches.

Everything was handed down and mended. Carboard was put in shoes each day when holes were in soles. There was no money to spend on expensive wreaths or bouquets – all gardens were available.”

These were some of the memories that Mary Heiler of Castle Hill shared of living during the depression years at Peak Hill. Life has certainly changed since then, however some of her memories brought back some of my memories as a child during the mid-twentieth century especially in the 1940s & 50s following the end of World War 2.

AS WE WERE

PHOTOS FROM THE PAST

COLLECTION COMPILED BY
IVOR JONES SHOWING LIFE IN
 THE HILLS AND HAWKESBURY
 AREA DURING PAST DECADES.



Photos from Peak Hill

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Northmead, Baulkham Hills and Castle Hill Scouts at Government House for a once-in-a-lifetime camp

His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia welcomed Scouts from across Northmead, Baulkham Hills and Castle Hill to the grounds of Government House for the first time ever last Sunday 14th April to Friday 19th April. In total, the event had over 1,400 Scouts attending from the whole of Australia.

The Scouts Australia Camp marks the first time in history that Government House has opened its doors to Scouts, promising a week of unparalleled adventure, camaraderie, and personal growth. Scouts aged 5 to 25 from NSW and other states had the opportunity to enjoy a range of activities hosted throughout the ACT, including ropes courses, abseiling, mountain biking, bouldering and much more.

His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia is the Chief Scout of Scouts Australia.

"I am delighted that the grounds of Government House will be the backdrop for so many scouts from across Australia to come together, immerse themselves in team-building activities and forge lifelong friendships. It is going to be an action packed, fun few days and Linda and I are pleased to support Scouts Australia to host what will be a memorable occasion for all involved", the Governor-General said.

Assisted by Adult Leaders, all participants from Joey Scouts (aged 5 – 8) right through to Rover Scouts (aged 18-25) camped, dined and engaged in team-building activities, fostering lifelong friendships and memories.

Scouts had the opportunity to curate their own adventure-filled journey, selecting from a diverse spectrum of activities that cater to every interest and passion. From immersive explorations of flora and fauna to deep dives into Indigenous history and culture, emergency services simulations, photography sessions, enthralling theatre and performing arts workshops, to challenges like helicopter simulations, Archery and Rogaining (the sport of bush navigation), the camp's program was a customisable experience for every Scout.

The camp enabled the Scouts to achieve real learning outcomes whilst enshrining an adventurous, fun, challenging and inclusive program.



Research conducted by Scouts Australia in collaboration with Resilient Youth Australia has highlighted the profound positive impact of Scouting on participants' lives. Findings revealed that Scouts have an overall better life satisfaction than their non-Scouting peers, and that the longer they stay in Scouts, the more resilient they are likely to become. In particular, Scouts have a healthier mental state than non-Scouts (62.1% v 49.1%) and are more likely to feel good about themselves (81.8% v 70%).

To see the full adventure these youth members embarked on, please view the agenda they undertook: scouts.com.au/blog/2023/05/30/ggs-camp-2023-program/

PUZZLE

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

CODE WORD

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SUDOKU

Rating: ★ ★ ★ ★ ☆

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

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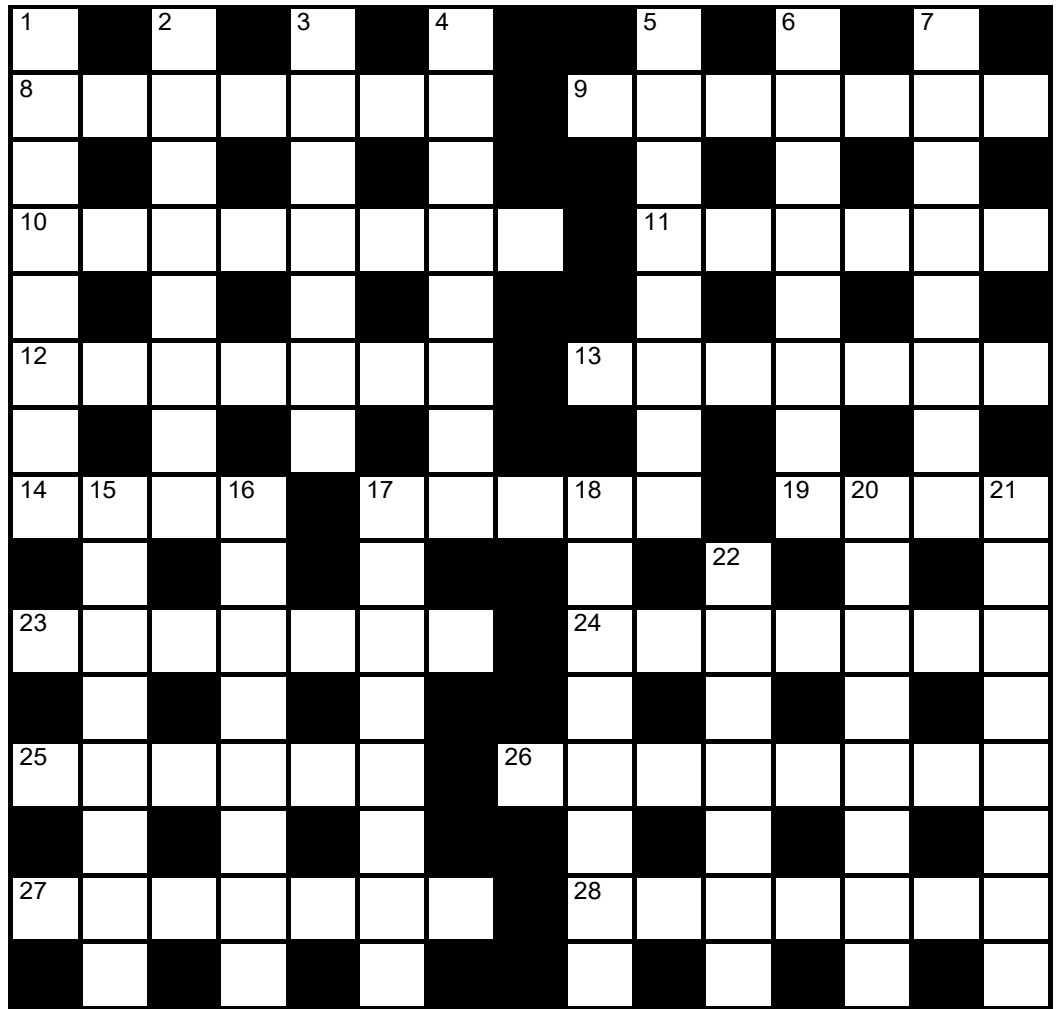
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Across

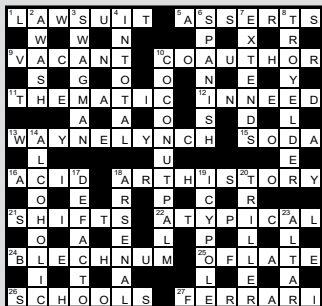
- 8. Burn
- 9. Illusory pointer to gold
- 10. Used in cooking
- 11. Bring forth
- 12. Bring up
- 13. Very detailed (2,5)
- 14. Dark-grey waterbird
- 17. Second largest stringed instrument
- 19. Youth charity (1,1,1,1)
- 23. Impacts
- 24. Asks over
- 25. Gets up late (4,2)
- 26. Shrink
- 27. Comments
- 28. Frequent-flyer perk

Down

- 1. Explosively violent
- 2. Cattle station trainee
- 3. Pride young 'un (4,3)
- 4. Not far away (4,4)
- 5. Inherited (4,4)
- 6. Wholly
- 7. Kind of medicine
- 15. Assistant
- 16. You know what I'm drinking (3,5)
- 17. In a rage, you might get as mad as one (3,5)
- 18. Behave in a vulgar way (4,2,2)
- 20. Like unicorns
- 21. Designated
- 22. Unremarkable

Answers from last issue

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU

| | | | | | | | | |
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Platypus research at St. Albans field day

BY TIM PALLISTER

Setting out from Dural and meeting up at St. Albans, Hawkesbury Nepean Landcare Network coordinator, Monique Bailey, organised a field trip and workshop to investigate threatened species in the region.

Our group met at the Pickled Wombat on Bulga Rd, after crossing the truss steel bridge over the Macdonald River.

We sat down for a community workshop on the need for a wildlife survey in the Macdonald River valley. Our first speaker, Dr. Michelle Ryan from Western Sydney University, spoke of her Platypus research and previous catch and release program that checked on the health of the population in their urban home range.

Our second speaker was Stephan from the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust who spoke of the known local threatened species, including plants as well as



animals. All were subject to the same problem of isolated home ranges with no connectivity to others, creating genetically similar groups which are vulnerable to becoming locally extinct.

We heard about the importance of online reporting tools, community engagement, citizen science, research projects and surveys to ensure all species are fully represented, which aids in the conservation of endangered flora and fauna.

WORD SEARCH LEGAL TERMS

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Answers from last issue

WORD SEARCH

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AFFIRMATION

ALIMONY

APPELLANT

BAD FAITH

COERCION

COMPLAINT

CONFESSION

DEFENDANT

DISSOLUTION

DUPLICITY

ESCROW

EVIDENCE

EXECUTOR

FELONY

GOOD FAITH

HARASSMENT

INJUNCTION

LITIGATION

PROBATE

REPEAL

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