

COMMUNITY NEWS

No. 978 Ph: 4374 1039 Mo: 0412 669 649 Email: enquiries@cnews1.com.au Web: cnews1.com.au 5th December 2025

Rural Seniors Voices – A New Chapter For Our Mountain Community

A small but passionate group of Central Mangrove and Mountain District seniors met last week to breathe new life into a local initiative that began several years ago.

Originally known as Aging With Dignity, the group has now formalised its official name: Rural Seniors Voices. The name reflects what this community needs; a place where older residents can come together, be heard, and advocate for services that support ageing well in a rural area. The group includes long-standing locals Clara Jones, Margaret Pontifex, Dianne Starkey, Alan Smedley, and others committed to keeping our community connected.

With support from Central Coast Care and the generous provision of space by Dr Anand at the Central Mangrove Medical Clinic, the group is now preparing for a fresh start in 2025.

Why this matters for our area

Rural communities often miss out on social programs, mental-health supports, and ageing services that urban areas take for granted. One of the group's goals is to identify exactly what our seniors need, whether that's transport, social connection, health supports, or just a reliable place to gather without having to travel far.

This Christmas lunch looks to build connection, belonging, and the future of senior support on the Mountain. Everyone is welcome; long-term locals, newcomers, and anyone who would like to be part of shaping what senior support looks like in our region.

Rural Seniors Voices is here to make sure our community's elders are seen, heard, and included. We look forward to seeing you there. Christmas Lunch – Wednesday 18 December, 12pm–2pm Rural Seniors Voices will host a festive Christmas lunch at the Central Mangrove Community Hall Space,

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CB NETWORK

With the bushfire season upon us and the risk of storms also present, it is an opportune time to test the Emergency CB Radio Network.

During the recent power outage people were to be able to make contact to check on personal health and safety of neighbours and to get information on restoration times.

This is the network implemented by the Mangrove Emergency Planning and Communications Committee (MEPCC) using UHF channel 57.

Anyone with a UHF CB radio can join in.

The purpose of the network is to provide a backup system for residents:

- To contact each other to check on health & safety.
- To contact 000 and emergency services using the radios to relay messages to locations that still have phone and internet connections.
- To organise urgent supplies and equipment.
- To assist emergency services and other providers to target resources where most needed.

At the recent AGM and team meeting, the MECPP discussed the need to freshen up on the use of the system and confirm which stations in the network are able to contact each other.

To do this there will be two system wide testing days, one on Thursday Dec 11th and a second on Tuesday Dec 16th.

Between 6pm to 8pm on these days:

- Turn your CB's on and try to remain within earshot
- Ensure that silent mode is turned off

located at 1639 Nurses Road.

Lunch will be provided, and a local country music performer will be performing Christmas carols. It will be a simple, joyful opportunity for local seniors to reconnect before the year ends, and to hear more about what Rural Seniors Voices plans for 2026 and beyond.

Julie Keegan
Central Coast Care

- Set your squelch to an appropriate level
- During this time make several calls and if you hear a call respond. Make a note of who you can speak to, their call sign and location and also the quality of the communication.
- Email a summary of your records to mepccinc@gmail.com.

The contact information will be collated and emailed to all participants so you will be able get a good idea of which CB stations you can reliably contact during an emergency.

This Emergency CB Radio Network encompasses an area from Spencer and Mt. White in the south through to Wollombi and Paynes Crossing in the north and out to Somersby in the east.

Keith Aranjó
Secretary, MEPCC

Notice of AGM

The Mangrove Mountain & Districts Country Fair Committee would like to invite community members to attend our 2025 AGM.

**Thursday 11th December 7pm
at The Union Church Hall**

All welcome.
Louisa Foxford, Secretary

Helen Mirren once said: Before you argue with someone, ask yourself, is that person even mentally mature enough to grasp the concept of a different perspective. Because if not, there's absolutely no point....

....Sometimes, the strongest thing you can do is walk away—not because you have nothing to say, but because you recognize that some people aren't ready to listen. And that's not your burden to carry.

STOP!

Next issue Published
19th December 2025

**** DEADLINE ****

**** 12th December '25 ****

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Trustee for the Mangrove Mountain Union Church 1914 Trust Inc. - 2024/25 AGM - 15/9/2025

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the committee and executive for their continued support and dedication in keeping the Church, Hall, and grounds neat and tidy for all our users. Your efforts are truly appreciated by everyone who visits and uses our facilities.

This year, the memorial plaque for W Jamison and R L Le Gray was completed and installed at the end of the church. This was accomplished in time for us to hold a special Anzac Day service in the church, thanks to the hard work of David Ferry and Merrill Jackson.

The Poets Breakfast, run by the CWA, was a great success on March 16 and brought together many members of our community. Throughout the year, working bees repaired the sign on the roadside, mowed the grass, cleared fallen branches, and performed general

gardening to maintain our beautiful grounds.

Thanks to Steve Raines, the RFS completed a pile burn to reduce the fire hazard on the western side of the property, providing a safer environment for all.

The plant stall at the MMCF was very successful, with a big thanks to Ryan Howard for organizing the plants from local nurseries. I also want to thank all the helpers on the day, as well as those who assisted with setting up and packing up.

The Mountain Districts Men's Shed has been incorporated and is progressing well. They have been donated a shed to rebuild, which can happen once this committee and the Men's Shed committee put an agreement in place and secure council approval. This may delay the project slightly, but we look forward to its completion.

All the pews have been reupholstered, and the kneeling pads are being refurbished. Thanks to Elaine and Steve Raines, we acquired the fabric at a very reasonable price of \$1,287, compared to a quote of \$9,600 to have the job done professionally. We decided to do it ourselves, which has saved the Trust a significant amount.

We have accepted Woody's quote to repair the two end windows, and this work should happen in the near future. Additionally, we have submitted a

grant application to the MMCF to help fund this important project.

I must mention that we received a generous \$2,000 bequest from Helen Brougham to help the Trust. Her support is greatly appreciated and will assist us in our ongoing work.

Bookings in the Church and Hall have been going well with no complaints to date. This year, we hosted another funeral in the Church and welcomed the Danish Church service during the year.

A big thank you is also due to Gerald Charskey for his generous donation of a Yamaha Clavinova electric piano/organ, which is now being used regularly and appreciated by our community.

With the MMCF nearly upon us, I'd like to thank Ryan for agreeing to organize plants again and to those who have already volunteered to help on the day. Special thanks also go to Peter Comensoli and the Catholic congregation, who have also volunteered to assist on the day.

Thank you all for your dedication and commitment to the Mangrove Mountain Union Church Trust. Your hard work ensures our facilities remain a welcoming place for everyone in our community.

Sincerely

Ron Collins, President
The Trustee Mangrove Mountain Union Church 1914 Trust

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Calling Past Families: Opportunity to Sponsor a Perpetual Trophy

Central Mangrove Public School takes great pride in recognising our students' achievement and commitment to learning. We are excited to offer an opportunity to establish a tradition that celebrates the ongoing excellence of our students—perpetual trophies that recognise outstanding achievement.

We are reaching out to past families who have been part of our school's journey to express interest in sponsoring a perpetual trophy. This is a wonderful way to leave a lasting legacy within the school community and inspire current and future students.

What is a Perpetual Trophy?

A perpetual trophy is a special award passed down each year to a student who demonstrates excellence in a specific category. It serves as a

symbol of achievement and continuity, connecting generations of students and families through shared pride and accomplishment.

Why Sponsor a Perpetual Trophy?

- Celebrate your family's connection to the school and support current students.
- Promote excellence in public education.
- Create a meaningful tradition that endures across years and decades.

How to Get Involved

If you are a past family interested in sponsoring a perpetual trophy or would like more information, please contact the school office on 4373 1156 or email centmangro-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au.

Let's work together to build a lasting legacy that celebrates our school community's spirit and achievements. We look forward to hearing from you!

Amy Ball

Central Mangrove Public School Principal



**Come and celebrate
with us**

***"The reason for the season.
God's gift to the World
Jesus' birth"***

**Christmas Service
25th of December
at 9.30 am.**

**28th of December at
9.30am a message for the
NEW YEAR**

**at the Mangrove Mountain
Union Church**

Every One is welcome,
see you there.

God Bless,
Georgia Sidiropoulos

Dr. S. ANANDASIVAM

(ANAND)

MBBS, FRACGP, AMCC

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Report on Somersby & Kariong Overland Flood Study

The Somersby and Kariong Catchments Overland Flood Study was prepared for the Central Coast Council by Kellogg Brown & Root Pty Ltd in 2023 and the community was asked for input.

This study informed the draft report prepared by Kellogg Brown & Root Pty Ltd and placed on public exhibition between Monday 3 November and Monday 1 December 2025 with the community able to make formal submissions during this period.

Flooding on the Central Coast can be categorised into 3 main groups:

- Mainstream flooding – occurs when rivers and creeks start to break their banks and cause inundation of land that is typically dry. In addition to rivers and creeks, when our lakes and lagoons rise and inundate typically dry land, we also consider this to be mainstream flooding.
- Local overland flooding – occurs when intense rainfall overwhelms drainage systems or the ground's natural ability to absorb water, causing water to flow over the ground's surface and eventually making its way into our rivers, creeks, and other major bodies of water.
- Coastal flooding – normally occurs when dry and low-lying land is submerged by seawater, often caused by tidal or storm-driven coastal events, including storm surge and wind-induced waves in coastal waterways.

The Somersby and Kariong catchments cover an area of approximately 66.5 km² and primarily drain west towards the Hawkesbury River with a small area draining east to Brisbane Waters.

A ridgeline traverses through the study area to which a majority of development (residential and industrial) sits in close proximity.

As such, these catchments experience overland flooding caused by short and intense rainfall events but they are some of the few locations on the Central Coast that lack detailed flood information altogether and the study is important to establish a detailed understanding of flood risk in the area.

In addition, a portion of the study area has been identified as a 'regionally significant growth area' as part of the Central Coast Regional Plan 2041 (DPE, 2022), highlighting the need to define the existing overland flooding behaviour to support planning procedures.

This Flood Study is a key step in the Flood Risk Management Process and will help Council make more informed

decisions about land use planning and flood risk management to support a safer and more resilient community.

There is some concern among residents that changes in the flood rating will affect insurance premiums and property values, however Council maintains that the process is necessary to keep the community safe and well-informed about flooding.

This project is supported by funding from the NSW Government's Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, and Water and is managed in line with the NSW Government's Flood Prone Land Policy.

For more information read the reports at:

<https://www.yourvoiceourcoast.com/somersbykariongfloodstudy>

Information from Central Coast Council & KBR Pty Ltd

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Spencer

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Rural Seniors Voices Christmas Lunch

18 December, 12:00pm-2:00pm
1639 Nurses Rd, Central Mangrove

Join your local seniors community for a relaxed
Christmas get-together with:

- Christmas lunch provided
- Live Christmas carols
- Great company & conversation
- A chance to talk about what our community needs

BYO any special dietary foods if required

*All welcome. Come share food, stories, music and
community.*



RSVP 9 DECEMBER

Contact:

(02) 7205 4656

justine@centralcoastcare.com.au

See you there!

Hosted by Rural Seniors Voices & Central Coast Care

Create your Emergency Action Plan with the Red Cross "Get Prepared" app

Get Prepared is an easy-to-use app that empowers you to make important decisions ahead of time by completing your RediPlan. Co-created by Australian Red Cross and NRMA Insurance, it helps you create a personal emergency plan, so you can take care of yourself, your loved ones, and what's important to you.

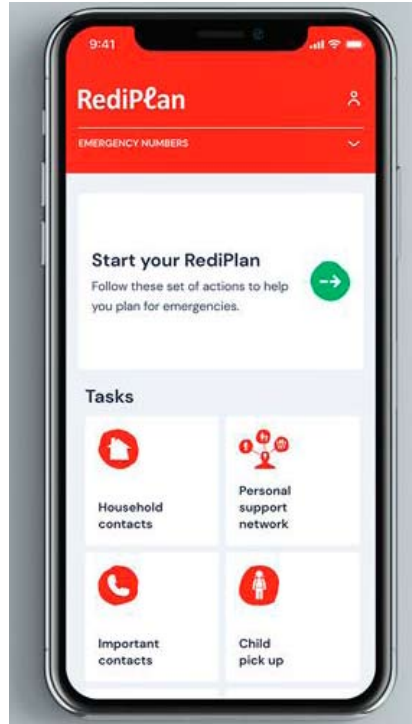
When emergencies happen there are lots of decisions to make and a lot to do. With the Get Prepared app you can prepare for the unexpected by completing your RediPlan and being better prepared for emergencies.

Easy to create all-hazards emergency plan

The new improved Red Cross Get Prepared app, co-created with NRMA Insurance, is an important emergency plan companion. It allows users to digitally complete an Australian Red Cross RediPlan - our all-hazards emergency plan.

Prepare your mind

RediPlan is unique as it takes an all-hazards and psychosocial approach to preparing for emergencies.



Simple checklists and actions

Using the Get Prepared app, you complete your comprehensive RediPlan which includes key contacts, meeting places, animal plans, key documents, special items, medical information and stress management plans. All your vital information, all in one emergency plan.

Share your plan with people you care about

The end result is a PDF RediPlan you can save, print and share with your

important people.

To protect your privacy, Red Cross will use your contact information in accordance with our Privacy Collection Notice. All other information will be stored on your local device only.

Get Prepared is an easy to use app that helps you access information and tools to complete an emergency plan. It builds on the Red Cross RediPlan.

Get Prepared has been co-created with NRMA Insurance, as part of a shared commitment to help Australians prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters and unexpected events.

To get the RediPlan app scan the QR code below or go to <https://www.redcross.org.au/emergencies/prepare/get-prepared-app/>



Why is it important to prepare?

In over 100 years as a leader in disaster response, we've found that prepared people are the most resilient when affected by an emergency. Even just taking a one small step today can help protect yourself and your loved ones in the future.

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The app allows you to jump in and out of RediPlan modules whenever it suits you, but there's no better time than the present!

Even if you're pressed for time, start by filling in your Key Contacts & Meeting Places. Even this small section could help you to stay connected to your loved ones in case of an emergency.

What will I have after completing my RediPlan on the app?

You'll have a downloadable PDF that you can share with your loved ones filled with your:

- Key contacts
- Meeting places
- Pet & animal plans
- Important documents
- Sentimental items
- Medical information
- Stress management plans

For information on RediPlan and other RedCross resources go to: <https://www.redcross.org.au/prepare/>



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WICEN Radio Operations at the Hawkesbury Canoe Classic

The Hawkesbury Canoe Classic (HCC), a renowned annual charity event, took place over the weekend of 8th and 9th of November, starting at Freemans Reach (Windsor) at 4:00pm and concluding at Mooney Mooney, 12-15 hours later. This is a charity event raising funds for Arrow, the Bone Marrow Transplant Foundation.

The total course length being 111km with less daunting stages of 31km (Sackville) and 65km (Wisemans Ferry). Craft varied from single kayaks, canoes, ocean racing skis, dragon boats and multi-paddler outriggers. All contestants' craft carried GPS trackers.

For an event involving 215 paddlers, the support included over 250 land crew, 110 SES personnel, 40 Marine Rescue members, 35 WICEN radio operators, 25 SES watercraft, and 6 Marine Rescue vessels. Nearly all of

the support personnel are volunteers.

The radio communications in such an event are critical for safety and smooth operations. WICEN radio network operations were controlled from Dural, with field stations at 12 checkpoints along the river.

Radio operations were sophisticated, utilizing linked, established, and portable repeaters, along with individual masts at each checkpoint. Various VHF and UHF bands were used as well as backup PSN at the major checkpoints. Marine VHF was also used from Wisemans Ferry and downstream. Digital (TRBO i.e. DMR) and analogue (FM) voice were

primarily used; some digital telemetry was transmitted between checkpoints, either directly or via a portable or established repeater.

Karen, Peter and two other WICEN radio operators were stationed at a major checkpoint, being INDIA at Wisemans Ferry. The team completed the setup at 2:00pm Saturday, conducted a radio check to Dural, and shut down at 4:15am Sunday. With constant radio traffic, two radio operators were required while the others logged and liaised with the SES and HCC volunteers.

All in all, very busy with a friendly, helpful atmosphere between all



About WICEN Wireless Institute Civil Emergency Network [WICEN]

WICEN consists of a number of state or territory based volunteer emergency communications service organisations whose members are primarily licensed amateur radio operators.

Members are accredited to assist in emergency situations and are able to provide emergency and safety communications for other agencies when conventional communications networks fail or are inadequate. Emergency radio networks can be

assembled quickly, taking advantage of both amateur radio frequencies and services and licenced non-amateur frequency allocations.

Each WICEN entity operates independently under appropriate local, state, or other disaster plans.

WICEN NSW Inc, <http://nsw.wicen.org.au>, operates as a specialist support squad of the Volunteer Rescue Association, www.rescue.org.au, providing recognition through the State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 and the State Rescue Board.

Key objectives of WICEN are to provide: communications support for emergency services operating in areas where infrastructure has failed

or in remote areas where there is no suitable communications infrastructure communications, support for community and charitable events needing communications networks beyond regular mobile phone services and operators for emergency operations centres

WICEN members undertake additional formal training, supplementing the knowledge required to hold an amateur radio licence from the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

Information from WICEN Australia & WICEN NSW

<https://wicen.org.au/>
<https://nsw.wicen.org.au/>

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volunteers and excellent radio training varying from portable setup to unrelenting radio traffic for hours on end.

To conclude, an interesting anecdote highlights the importance of reliable communication systems.

We tasked the SES crew at our checkpoint to pass “canoes left here” to downstream using a supplied marine VHF base radio plugged into a 240 volt power point.

Partway through the night, we realized the SES marine communications were down, with the SES showing puzzled expressions at our fully operational radios and lights.

Our checkpoint WICEN operators were totally oblivious to the blackout; everything was running on a battery supply, including four radios, a notebook, a second screen, a broadband hotspot, and lights.

It shows the value of having backup power, as used in the Mangrove Emergency Planning & Communications Committee (MEPCC) network.

Peter Boskos

Top Right: Karen Boskos, Kulnura resident, operating a field station at Wisemans Ferry

Bottom Right: Markers show the GPS Fob tracking number for each canoe



Mental health is as important as physical health



Looking after your mental health and wellbeing helps you stay strong and resilient for the road ahead.

Staying connected with others, keeping active and reaching out when you need support can help you feel strong, grounded and well – no matter what life brings.



For more information to support your mental health and wellbeing, visit www.health.nsw.gov.au/support or call the Mental Health line on 1800 011 511.

Central Mangrove Public School STEM Fun!

Students at Central Mangrove Public School have been busy with some awesome STEM projects this term! In the senior class, we learned all about world cultures by making cool 3D models of the Earth's two hemispheres. We discovered the continents, oceans, and famous landmarks around the world.

Next, we got to explore different countries like Nepal, Brazil, New Zealand, Siberia, Egypt, and Australia. We learned about the kinds of shelters people live in and made our own little models using things like timber, cardboard, tape, glue, foil, and paper.

To share what we learned, we created QR codes for our parents and carers to scan. These codes link to special infographics that show our research, made with Canva.

We've had so much fun learning with STEM this term!

Jackson and Charlie, CMPS students

*Amy Ball, Principal
Central Mangrove Public School*





CELEBRATE *Christmas*

DINNERS ARE BACK AT THE SPRINGS!

Join us on Friday 5th December and Saturday 20th December from 5.30pm.
Stay tuned for more dinner dates in the New Year.

★ **CHRISTMAS SPECIALS MENU**

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“Private, Peaceful and One of a Kind” 241 Williams Rd, Kulnura

5  2  3  1  9 ac

Set within a tightly held pocket of the Central Coast hinterland, this impressive 9-acre property combines striking architectural design with beautifully landscaped grounds by Michael Cooke. Designed to sit in harmony with its natural surrounds, the home makes the most of its elevated setting, leafy outlooks, and peaceful privacy.

The residence unfolds across two well-planned levels, centred around a generous main living zone that connects seamlessly to the outdoors. High vaulted ceilings and extensive glazing bring in natural light, while the covered alfresco area creates the perfect extension of the living space for year-round entertaining.



“5 Acres of Opportunity” 111 Elwins Road

5  2  6  5 ac

Set on a clear and usable 5-acre parcel, this property offers a perfect balance of space, comfort, and versatility- ideal for families, hobby farmers, or those looking for extra room to spread out.

The main residence features three well-sized bedrooms, each with built-in wardrobes, a neat and tidy kitchen, and open living and dining areas designed for easy everyday living. Year-round comfort is assured with a split-system air conditioner, and the home also benefits from a solar system to help keep energy costs low.

Separate from the main home, a two-bedroom, one-bathroom studio provides great flexibility- perfect for extended family, guests, or potential rental income.



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Fairview Homestead Association Celebrates a Year of Growth and Change

The Fairview Homestead Association's 12th Annual General Meeting, held on 17 November, marked a milestone year of revitalisation, strengthened partnerships and growing community support for the preservation of Fairview and the historic Dubbo

Gully precinct.

President Dr Matt Lohmeyer reported a year of "significant change and growth", driven by a new engagement strategy with Central Coast Council, NSW Government agencies and local community groups. Membership has surged to 182, with hundreds more showing support through social media and the ongoing petition to save Fairview—clear evidence of strong public commitment to protecting the region's heritage.

The Association's heightened presence at community events, heritage workshops and markets has deepened

local connections, and monthly heritage excursions to Fairview have also become a popular new initiative. An important development this year came through strengthened ties with Council's Water & Sewer Department, custodians of the Fairview site. The Department commissioned a structural and heritage assessment, which confirmed Fairview's high historical significance and found the homestead's core structure to be still in "reasonable structural condition" – an encouraging result after over a decade without any maintenance.

Positive momentum continues, with termite treatment now underway, roof patching planned, and Water & Sewer developing a broader heritage interpretation strategy for Dubbo Gully in collaboration with the Council's Heritage Officer.

The Association has developed



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WHAT'S ON WEEKLY

MONDAY

HAPPY HOUR 4-6pm

TUESDAY

BINGO from 11am - \$18 Pizza night
HAPPY HOUR 4-6pm

WEDNESDAY

MEAT RAFFLE drawn at 730pm
\$20 schnitzels (kids eat free)

THURSDAY

POKER 630pm \$24 steak night
MEMBERS BADGE DRAW 730pm

FRIDAY

HAPPY HOUR 4-6pm, COCKTAIL HOUR 6-7pm
MUSICAL BINGO 630pm every fortnight
MEAT RAFFLE drawn at 730pm
New restaurant specials weekly from 530pm

SATURDAY

POOL COMP from 630pm. Entry fee \$5

SUNDAY

Kids eat free



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several potential future-use concepts for Fairview, aiming to make the restored homestead both culturally valuable and financially viable. Looking ahead, 2026 will focus on securing Council support and shaping a sustainable, long-term future for the Fairview.

In recognition of their longstanding service, Graeme and Lyn Davies were appointed Honorary Life Members.

The AGM also welcomed Kevin Armstrong to the Committee who



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brings deep experience and interest in community, council and heritage matters. He will be a significant asset as the Association enters this promising new chapter in Fairview's history.

Working together with Council and the Dept. of Water & Sewer, we look forward to achieving significant

outcomes for Fairview. Thank you to all of our members for their support. If you have not yet signed the petition or joined the Association, please make your voice heard for Fairview and the heritage of Dubbo Gully – scan the QR Code!

Fairview Association Press Release

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Mangrove Mountain RFS Brigade – Christmas Wrap-Up

On behalf of the Mangrove Mountain Rural Fire Service Brigade, I would like to wish everyone a Merry and safe Christmas, and a Happy New Year. Although we generally get on with the job quietly, I would like to take a moment to share some of the achievements and changes within the Mangrove Mountain Brigade over the past year.

I am honoured to be serving my third year as Captain of this incredible brigade, supported by an exceptional leadership team. This year, we welcomed two new Deputy Captains—Mathew Welsh and a familiar face, Paul West—who join our dedicated existing Deputies, Andy Schneider and Maciek Fibrich, along with Senior Deputy Captain Damian Harvey and Operational Officer Rob Carraro. Their support, experience, and commitment make my role possible, and together we are fortunate to lead such a strong brigade. I can't forget our Executive team who run quietly in the background but keep this machine running smoothly.

Beyond leadership, we proudly



welcomed five new members, all of whom have successfully completed their Bush Firefighter qualifications. We look forward to seeing them out on the truck and contributing to our operations. In addition, two members achieved their response and off-road driving qualifications, further strengthening our capability. Other members have completed Village Firefighter, Advanced Firefighter, Crew Leader, chainsaw operations, First Aid, Group Leader and more. A major milestone this year was equipping the brigade for structural firefighting, with three members completing the necessary training—an achievement that has already proven its value. The introduction of breathing

apparatus to our trucks and training significantly enhances our ability to protect our community.

Mangrove Mountain is fortunate to have truly dedicated members who respond any time of day and give up precious time off to respond to incidents of every kind. Our members commit their weekends to training—both learning themselves and training others across the Central Coast as part of the district training team. They also give their time to maintain our trucks, equipment, and station, ensuring everything runs smoothly. This brigade simply would not function without their contribution. To the families of our members, thank you for the support you provide behind



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the scenes. Your understanding and encouragement enable our volunteers to serve our community.

To every Mangrove Mountain RFS member: thank you for another outstanding year. Your time, effort, and dedication do not go unnoticed. You are the reason our brigade is such a rewarding and enjoyable place to belong.

Wishing everyone a safe and joyful festive season.

Tarryn Nester
Captain



Christmas Carols in The Garden

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14TH 2025 1614 YARRAMALONG RD, YARRAMALONG
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ARTS NEWS

The Wollombi Valley Arts Council encourages and fosters all kinds of artistic and cultural expression within the Wollombi Valley in order to support and promote artists and our community.

WVAC EMERGING ARTISTS AWARDS 2025

The winner of the Les Elvin People's Choice Award \$500: Kaye Lovie - 'Gum Blossom'. Kaye also won the 2325 Australian Flora award for this painting.

Runner up: Jan Bowmaker - 'King Kooka' \$250

Congratulations to you both.

Our next exhibition is....

THE ARTISTS MARKET

An exhibition by 16 local artists
6th December 2025 - 11th January 2026. Exhibition open DAILY 10am - 4pm

You are invited to join the artists for the exhibition opening on Saturday 6th December from 4pm until late, with DJ Submaster Si.



Jan Bowmaker - 'King Kooka'



Kaye Lovie - 'Gum Blossom'

This will also be the WVAC's end of year party. Please join us for drinks and nibbles. All welcome.

WVAC warmly invites you to...

The Old Fireshed Gallery

The old fireshed was converted to a much-needed gallery space for our local artists to display their works in 2003. The dimensions of the exhibition space are 9m x 6m.

The Old Fireshed Gallery is situated behind the Wollombi Cultural Centre in the main street of Wollombi, and holds regular exhibitions throughout the year.

To book the gallery for an exhibition or other cultural or arts related function, please contact artscouncil@wollombi.org

LIFE DRAWING at the Old Fireshed Gallery

Artists and members that have been attending the Life Drawing classes with Mandy Davies will be heartened to know that WVAC have decided to continue with the classes out of respect for Mandy.

There will be a different tutor every week, a shared endeavour. We will be creating a calendar for 2026 dates. If

The Artists Market

@ The Old Fireshed Gallery, Wollombi

December 6th '25 - January 11th '26



Bhret McIntyre



Chris Reid



Jan Bowmaker



Elrod Vella



Amanda Broberg



Wendy Black



Jennifer Little



Campbell Murray



MaldenK



Polina Karuso



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Julia Francis



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Central Coast Crown land managers encouraged to apply for \$13.5 million crown reserves improvement fund

The Minns Labor Government is delivering better communities across NSW with a major boost to the 2025–26 Crown Reserves Improvement Fund.

Funding has increased to \$13.5 million, more than \$2 million higher than last year to support upgrades and maintenance across the state's Crown land reserves.

In a move to help deliver more local projects, the Minns Labor Government has also halved the minimum general grant amount to \$50,000, making it easier for Crown land managers to apply for smaller, high-impact projects that make a big difference to their communities.

The Crown Reserves Improvement Fund supports repairs, maintenance, and upgrades that strengthen the local economies and enhance the cultural, sporting and recreational life of NSW.

Grant applications are open until 5:00 pm AEDT on 5 December 2025, with funding available for projects up to \$1 million.

General project applications will be evaluated by community impact, reserve utilisation, deliverability, and affordability.

Applications that best meet the relevant criteria will be recommended for funding and presented to the Minister for Lands and Property for approval before final allocation of funds is determined by a Crown Lands assessment committee in early-to-mid 2026.

For more information, potential applicants from the Central Coast can visit the Reserve Manager Website. Alternatively, they can contact the Department's funding team on 1300 886 235 (option 5) or via email at reservefunding@crowland.nsw.gov.au.

Member for Gosford, Liesl Tesch said "The fund is a fantastic opportunity for local organisations to access funding

to maintain and upgrade reserves and community facilities that they manage on Crown land.

"It was great to see funding through this grant in 2024 to tackle noxious weeds at Mangrove Creek Recreation Reserve and it would be wonderful to see more funding delivered to our community in the future.

"Local councils, community groups, and showgrounds manage Crown land reserves and facilities that are often the backbone of our community and I encourage eligible organisations to apply."

Minister for Lands and Property Steve Kamper said "The Minns Labor Government is committed to building better communities across NSW and the Crown Reserves Improvement Fund keeps public reserves safe, vibrant and accessible.

"Investing in Crown reserves helps to support local industry and enrich the cultural, sporting and recreational life of our communities across the state."

*Media Release from the
Office of Liesl Tesch MP
NSW Member for Gosford*



you are interested in attending 2026 Life Drawing classes, please contact us.

The remaining classes in 2025 will be held on 12th November and 3rd December.

To register, please send an email to artscouncil@wollombi.org

*Wollombi Valley Arts Council Inc
c/o General Store, Wollombi 2325*

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The Hidden Impact of Farming Noise on Hearing, Tinnitus, and Memory

Farming may seem like a peaceful and rewarding lifestyle, but many farmers face an often-overlooked occupational hazard — noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL). The constant use of loud machinery such as tractors, harvesters, chainsaws, and grain dryers exposes the ears to harmful noise levels over long periods. These sounds, often exceeding 85 decibels (dB), can gradually damage the sensitive hair cells in the inner ear that are essential for hearing. Once damaged, these cells do not regenerate, leading to permanent hearing loss.

Noise and Hearing Damage

Prolonged exposure to noisy farming equipment slowly erodes hearing ability. The process is usually gradual, so many individuals do not realize it until communication becomes difficult — for example, struggling to hear conversations in group settings or missing environmental sounds like birds or alarms. Without intervention, this damage continues to worsen over time.

The Role of Age

Age naturally contributes to hearing decline, a condition known as presbycusis. As people get older, the auditory system becomes less efficient, especially for high-frequency sounds. When combined with decades of exposure to farming noise, hearing loss can progress faster and become more pronounced. Older farmers are therefore at particularly high risk, facing the combined effects of occupational noise and age-related hearing changes.

Tinnitus: The Persistent Ringing

Many farmers with hearing loss also experience tinnitus, a constant ringing, buzzing, or hissing in the ears. Tinnitus is caused by overactive auditory pathways in the brain trying to compensate for lost hearing input. It can range from mildly irritating to

severely distressing, affecting sleep, focus, and emotional well-being.

Impact on Memory and Brain Health

Hearing loss and tinnitus do not just affect the ears — they can also influence brain health. When hearing deteriorates, the brain has to work harder to process sound, diverting resources away from memory and thinking. Over time, this extra cognitive effort may contribute to memory issues and cognitive decline. Several studies have linked untreated hearing loss with a higher risk of dementia and reduced mental sharpness in later life.

Prevention and Protection

Protecting hearing should be a priority for everyone working in agriculture. Using hearing protection such as earmuffs or earplugs while operating noisy machinery can significantly reduce the risk of damage. Taking regular breaks from noise and maintaining equipment to minimize sound output also helps.

The Role of Hearing Aids

For those who have already experienced hearing loss, modern hearing aids play a vital role in preserving both hearing health and cognitive well-being. Today's devices use advanced noise reduction and directional microphone technology to enhance speech clarity while minimizing background noise — ideal for farm and social environments. By restoring access to sound, hearing aids help reduce the strain on the brain, ease communication, and may even slow down cognitive decline.

Hearing aids can also offer relief from tinnitus through sound therapy features, which generate soothing background sounds that help mask or retrain the brain's response to ringing sensations. Early adoption of hearing aids not only improves daily

communication but also supports mental health and overall quality of life.

Conclusion

Long-term exposure to farming machinery noise can have serious and lasting effects on hearing, leading to tinnitus, communication difficulties, and even cognitive decline. However, these outcomes are largely preventable. Using hearing protection consistently, undergoing regular hearing assessments, and seeking timely intervention with hearing aids can protect both the ears and the brain. By taking proactive steps, farmers can continue to enjoy their work and lifestyle while maintaining sharp hearing and healthy minds well into the future.

Jithin Punnakuzhathil Jacob

BSc Sp&Hg, MSc Audiology, MACAud, Qualified Tinnitus Retraining Therapist.

Director and Audiologist

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Yarramalong Community Church

CHRISTMAS SERVICE 10:00AM

Sunday

21st December 2025

All welcome:

St Barnabas Church

1669 Yarramalong Road. Yarramalong

All denominations are welcome to
join us at 10am for our Christmas Service.
Guest speaker, Classic Carols, Live Band

Let's celebrate Christmas
together in the Valley



For more info:

Margaret 0411104770



REGULAR ACTIVITIES & MEETINGS

RURAL FIRE SERVICES

Bucketty RFS	Weekend Training General Meeting Contact	3rd Sat, 9am-12 pm 4 meetings per year bucketty@lowerhunterfrs.com.au 4998 8130
Calga-Mt. White RFS	General meeting Training Information & updates Contact	3rd Mon of the month, 7.30pm all welcome Every Monday 6.30 except public holidays Facebook.com/calga/mtwhiteruralfirebrigade/ Captain.calgamwhite@ccrfs.org.au - Zack Winslade.
Kulnura VBFB at Greta Rd Station	General meeting Training	1st Wednesday of the month, 7.30pm 3rd Wednesday of the month 7.00pm
Mangrove Mountain RFS Bloodtree Rd	General Meeting Training / Maintenance	Last Wednesday of the month, 7 pm, All Wednesday's except last of month, 7 pm
Spencer RFS	General Meeting Training Maintenance	2nd Monday of the month Meeting 6.30pm 3rd Monday 6:30pm 4th Monday 6:30pm E: captain-Spencer-vol@rfs.nsw.gov.au 0415 668953. 4778 Wisemans Ferry Rd
Somersby RFS	General Meeting Training/Maintenance	First Wed of the month 7.30pm at the Station Every Wed night 7.30 at the Station (except before Wed general meeting)
Yarramalong RFS		Information: www.facebook.com/YarramalongRuralFireBrigade/ Phone contact: 0494 344 030 Email: volunteer@yarramalongrfs.org.au

COMMUNITY & SOCIAL

Central Coast Plateau Chamber of Commerce	First Tuesday each month 7.00PM MMMC
Coastlink Friendship Group	Wed 9.30am-2pm at the Health Centre, Nurses Rd, Central Mangrove
Country Women's Association (Somersby)	Second Wed of each month, at Somersby Hall Wiseman's Ferry Road, Somersby, contact Sue, 43721280 or 0407768000.
Country Women's Association (Peats Ridge & District)	Third Monday of the month at the Kulnura Hall. Any enquiries please contact Christine 0419 400 163.
Country Women's Association (Mangrove Mountain Evening Branch)	2nd & 4th Tues of the month, 4-8pm at Mangrove Mtn Union Church, 2154 Wisemans Ferry Rd, MMtn. General meeting 6pm 2nd Tues. Ph Judy 43771728
Gosford North Inner Wheel club	2nd Wed each month 11am at Phillip House in Karingong. Contact: Glenis Ph: 0400 486 760
Kulnura & District Garden Club	Second Monday, 9.30 for 10am start. Jacqui Maxwell 0455364262 kulnuradge@gmail.com
Kulnura Tuesday Tennis	Tue 9.30am-12.30pm, Kulnura Tennis Courts. Enquiries: Alison Palmer 0427731548.
Ladies of the Valley Afternoon Tea	1st Tues, 1pm to 2.30 at Angels Sussurri Cafe Yarramalong. Margaret Dale 0411104770
Mangrove Singers	1st & 3rd Tue, 6.00 7.30pm at Mangrove Golf Club, enquiries - Kim 0401516501
Mangrove Mountain & Districts Community Group	1st Thurs of the Month, excl Jan. 7.30pm, Mangrove Mtn Hall.
Mangrove Emergency Planning & Communications Committee	Contact: mepccinc@gmail.com, 0412669649
Mangrove Mountain Country Fair Committee Meeting	3rd Thu of mth except Jan, 7pm, at Union Church Hall. Pres - Steve 0455 155 075
Mountain Districts Association (MDA)	www.mountaindistrictsassociation.com.au secretary@mountaindistrictsassociation.com.au
Mountain District Football Club Meeting	Second Tuesday of the Month 6.30pm at the Mangrove Memorial Club
Probus - West Gosford	2nd Thu. Ph Elaine Burrows 0412988353
River Cares for the Lower Hawkesbury River District	President Marlee Maxwell Email rivercaresinc@gmail.com
Rotary Club Meeting	Friday 7.15am at Phillip House. 43404529
Spencer Community Progress Group Inc	President Brad Maisey, Community Meetings, 0436482201, spencercpg2@gmail.com
Spencer Community Ladies Social Club	Last Fri of month. 12.00 noon Spencer Community Centre, Jennifer Dayes 4377 1364 Articles to: spencercpg2@gmail.com
Newsletter	
Wisemans Ferry Community Men's Shed	Tues & Sat, 9am-5pm. Contact: Alan Hunt 4566 4626 or Adrian Acheson 0448 833 781

SPIRITUAL

Anglican Service - Mountain Districts	Every Sun 8am at Peats Ridge Scout Hall, Sunday School during school terms
Mangrove Mountain Union Church Trust	Committee Meeting 3rd Monday, 7.30pm at the Mangrove Mountain Union Church Hall
Mountain Districts Christian Church	Services 9.30am 2nd & 4th Sundays. Bible Study 4.30pm 1st & 3rd Mondays. Mangrove Mountain Union Church
St Barnabas Christian Service Yarramalong	Every Sunday, 9.30am. (Easter & (Christmas Carols dates to be advised)

(cont'd next page)

LIVESTOCK MARKET REPORT



Maitland Liveweight Cattle Sale 24th November 2025

620 cattle yarded this week at
Maitland. 530 Trade/90 export.

Trade job stronger . Export Job firm
to slightly easier.

- Restocker Heifers up to 250kg made
254 c/kg to 425 c/kg
- 250kg-300kg made 367/kg to 430 c/
kg
- 300kg to 380kg made 321 c/kg to
430c/kg
- Restocker steers up to 250kg made
440c/kg to 590 c/kg
- 250kg-300kg made 457c/kg to 588
c/kg
- 300kg-380kg made 434 c/kg to
530c/kg
- Yearling Steers to Feed made 378 c/
kg to 458 c/kg
- Yearling Heifers to Feed made 374
c/kg to 420 c/kg
- Vealers from 440 c/kg to 565 c/kg
- Bullocks made to 380 c/kg
- Cows made 325c/kg to 380 c/kg
- Bulls 265/kg to 380c/kg

Maitland Liveweight Cattle Sale 17th November 2025

650 cattle yarded this week at
Maitland. 562 Trade/88 export.

Trade job stronger . Export Job
firm.

- Restocker Heifers up to 250kg made
364 c/kg to 465 c/kg
- 250kg-300kg made 415/kg to 450 c/
kg
- 300kg to 380kg made 393 c/kg to
465c/kg
- Restocker steers up to 250kg made
457 c/kg to 590 c/kg

- 250kg-300kg made 539 c/kg to 590 c/kg
- 300kg-380kg made 448 c/kg to 565 c/kg
- Yearling Steers to Feed made 439 c/kg to 465 c/kg
- Yearling Heifers to Feed made 424 c/kg to 436 c/kg
- Vealers from 420 c/kg to 510 c/kg
- Bullocks made to 408 c/kg
- Cows made 367 c/kg to 404 c/kg
- Bulls 305/kg to 346c/kg

A friendly reminder that we are often in the area seeing clients and looking at their livestock and if you would like us to call in be sure to give us a call.

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- Spencer
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- Yarramalong

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Restitution Ministries
Independent SDA Church

YOUTH

Junior Girl Guides 5-10

Girl Guides 10-15

Scouts, Cubs & Venturers
Peats Ridge Scout Hall

HISTORICAL

Brisbane Waters Historical Society

Dharug & Lower Hawkesbury
Historical Society Inc.
First Fleeters Central Coast Chapter

The Pearl Beach Aboriginal History Group

Wyong District Museum &
Historical Society

ACTIVITY/HOBBY

Carnival Glass Club

Central Coast Junior Motorcycle Club Inc.

Coastal Communicators Toastmasters

Saturday Craft Group/Spining
and bobbin lace
Yarn group (knit, crochet etc)

HALL BOOKINGS

Kulnura Hall
Mangrove Mountain Hall
Mangrove Mountain Union Church & Hall

Somersby Hall and Mountain Districts
Culture and Heritage Centre
Yarramalong school of Arts / Hall

Saturdays 5pm St. Dionysios Greek Orthodox
Church, 21 Nurses Rd, Central Mangrove,
Contact Nai Hereford 0405 558 669
Holy Trinity Church, 2nd Sat 4pm, Phone
0412 201 851 as times may change.
2nd & 5th Sunday of the month, 4.30pm Mass
at St Michael the Archangel, Wollombi.
1st Sunday each month, 11.00am St. Barnabas
All welcome. Enq 0428 438577

Daily Holy Mass 8.00am to 8.30 am
Last Sun, 9am-4pm, One Day Retreat.
160 Hensons Road, Somersby Ph 0243721598
2nd & 4th Sun. of the month. 10 am, followed
by luncheon, tea, coffee, cakes (cost \$20).
1184 Peats Ridge Rd, Peats Ridge
Sun @9.30am, Church & Kid's Program,
Philip House, Mt Penang Gardens, Chris
Clarke email pastorkcbbc@outlook.com
10am every Saturday, Mangrove Mountain
Union Church.

Kooree Guide Cabin, 5.00pm – 6.30pm
Mondays in school term,
Kooree Guide Cabin, 6.00pm-7.30pm
Mondays in school term, Contact 0417451764
for further information
Cubs meet 6.30pm – 8.30pm Wednesdays
Scouts meet 7.00pm – 9.00pm Tuesdays
Venturers meet 7.00pm – 9.00pm Mondays
Contact 0460 696 941

25-27 Henry Kendall St., West Gosford, Ph:
4325 2270. www.henrykendallcottage.org.au
Last Sat of month. All welcome, contact Jan
Kofron 0405321478 jankofron@optusnet.com.au
2nd Sat of the month, 10.00am for 10.30,
Point Clare Hall (except Jan & Dec). Contact
Margaret 0409467710 or Gavin 0406645842.
3rd Fri of month 7.30pm Pearl Beach. Peggy
0411754577 pbaboriginalhistory@gmail.com
Sun to Thurs, 10am-2pm, other times by appt.
43521886 or info@alisonhomestead.com.au.
website: www.alisonhomestead.com.au

Meetings held every three months. Central
Coast, Newcastle, Sydney. Ring 0447723956
or 0448390077 for details.

Meeting dates: ccjuniormotorcycleclub.org.au,
FB: "Central Coast Junior Motorcycle Club
Official". David Smith 0412 506 503

1st & 3rd Thurs of month, 6:45pm to 8:45pm
at Doyalson-Wyee RSL. Debbie 0421216952
2nd Sat of the month Somersby Hall (10am to
2pm) cost \$5 per person Carmen 0434071305
Third Sun 2pm, Angels Sussurri Yarramalong.
Contact Kerry Watson 0404059167

Contact Central Coast Council.
Hall bookings Ryan Howard 0405416289
Church & Hall bookings 0412669649
mmucsecretary@outlook.com
Hall bookings: 0413 359 655
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enquiries@yarramalonghall.org.au
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The Silent Killer on track to be Australia's second biggest cancer and why it's time to get checked

Often called the 'silent killer', pancreatic cancer is one of Australia's deadliest cancers - showing few or no symptoms until it's often too late. With no national screening program and survival rates sitting at just 13%, Pancare Foundation is urging Australians to take charge of their pancreatic health this Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month.

More than 4,500 Australians are diagnosed with pancreatic cancer each year. Despite medical advances, it's projected to become the second leading cause of cancer-related death by 2030 - a grim statistic driven by late detection and limited awareness of symptoms and risk factors.

"Too many Australians hear the words 'pancreatic cancer' for the first time when it's already advanced," said Dr Mark Buzza, Head of Research, Innovation and Advocacy, Pancare Foundation. "Unlike other common cancers, there's no national screening

family history, smoking, long-term diabetes, chronic pancreatitis, heavy alcohol use and obesity. But the disease doesn't only affect those with risk factors.

"Pancreatic cancer doesn't discriminate," Buzza said. "It can strike anyone - men and women, young or old, healthy or not. Everyone should understand the signs and talk to their GP."

Because symptoms often appear late, early warning signs are often missed. People should see their GP if they experience any of the following for more than a few weeks:

- Jaundice
- Itchy skin or dark urine
- Abdominal or back pain
- Unexplained weight loss
- Persistent fatigue or nausea
- Changes in stool or appetite

"Too often, people dismiss these symptoms as stress or diet related," said Buzza. "If something feels off,



program, it's up to individuals to advocate for their own health. We urgently need more education, research funding and early detection tools to change that."

While pancreatic cancer can develop without any obvious cause, several factors can increase risk including

get checked. Early detection gives people the best chance of effective treatment."

If you are concerned about any symptoms or risk factors, talk to your doctor about pancreatic cancer. Early action could save your life.

Stay informed and spread the word.

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HORSE AGISTMENT AVAILABLE. Full care. Group and individual paddocks with shelters. Full size sand dressage arena, grass jumping arena. Located walking distance to Peats Ridge Village and Café. Call Bronte 0428603849

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You can find out more about pancreatic cancer on our website <https://pancare.org.au/cancer/pancreatic-cancer/>. Together, we can help turn the tide on one of the nation's most silent, and deadly, cancers.

About Pancare Foundation

Pancare Foundation is a leading charity committed to inspiring hope, raising awareness, supporting families and funding research for upper gastrointestinal (GI) cancers. With some of the lowest survival rates out of all the major cancers, we are dedicated to improving outcomes for those affected by upper GI cancers including pancreatic, liver, stomach, biliary and oesophageal cancers.

*Rachel Demarco
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CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

These columns will be set aside each issue for residents to advertise inexpensively and effectively in their own local paper. If you have anything you wish to sell, buy, swap, etc., ring 4374 1039 or 0412 669 649 during office hours. Rates start at \$4.00.

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POSITIONS AVAILABLE

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