

# The Community Leader

WE'RE ALL ABOUT GOOD NEWS

## Bayside



## THE KIDS ARE WRITING WONDROUS TALES AND WE'RE LOVING EVERY PAGE!

There's no shortage of young literary talent on the bayside, and a new anthology of wondrous tales is a fitting showcase for their art. Have you got your copy yet?

*Wondrous Tales*, compiled by Manly's Mad Hatters Bookshop, features 17 stories and poems written by budding authors aged 8 to 14. It's a highly imaginative collection of original works, wrapped in one delicious package of literary goodness. Assigned a theme of Wonder, the authors travelled deep into imaginary territory to bring home tales of bravery, mystery, and even a secret cat society! Find out more on page 5.

So, it would seem, the kids are alright. A quick flick through *Wondrous Tales* proves that. Thanks to Mad Hatters Bookshop for supporting and promoting local talent. Get down to Mad Hatters to buy your copy today – it's a sensory experience, because who doesn't love the smell of a new book, and supporting local authors and a small local bookstore at the same time is a win-win.

We hope you love reading this edition of The Community Leader, and if you've got good news, share it!

*Pictured: Young local authors who contributed to Wondrous Tales at The Mad Hatters Bookshop, Manly.*



**“WE CHOSE DAVID BECAUSE WE HATED HIM THE LEAST”**

**REVIEW: SELLER, WYNNUM**

**BAYSIDE**

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**DAVID PEARCE**

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# ROLLING FORWARD: WYNNUM'S WHEELCHAIR CHALLENGE RETURNS IN AUGUST

Wynnum's annual Wheelchair Challenge is back for its 2026 edition, with one small change: the date. This year, the Rotary Club of Wynnum and Manly has brought the event forward to Thursday August 6, so participants can take on the challenge in cooler, more comfortable conditions.

At its core, the challenge highlights the everyday barriers faced by people with disabilities, older residents with mobility limitations, and parents navigating Wynnum's streets with prams. It's a reminder that a small bump in the road can be a mountain to climb for many people. With 23% of the global population living with a disability, and more than half the world affected indirectly through family, friends, or colleagues, accessibility really should be a community-wide responsibility.

During the challenge, participants navigate the Wynnum CBD in wheelchairs, completing tasks such as purchasing items from local businesses and locating accessible toilets. The goods they buy are donated to Pete's Pantry, extending the event's impact to local families in need.

Last year's challenge, supported by Rotary, Spinal Life Australia, and Ampol, drew participants from government, business, and community organisations including BMD, Ham Bros, Think Tank Architects, the Wynnum Chamber of Commerce, Bayside Cinemas, and Rotary members. Their experiences revealed recurring issues: problematic traffic lights, difficult pedestrian crossings, steps and barriers, cluttered shop floors, and obstacles along footpaths.

One of the most powerful reflections came from Larry at ThinkTank Architects, who described the experience as "humbling" and "a real eye-opener". He noted that the challenge reshaped the way he thinks about movement, access, and everyday design decisions. His perspective reinforces the value of involving people across planning, design, and construction in understanding accessibility firsthand.



Last year's Wheelchair Challenge participants go shopping. Photo: Supplied.



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# MANLY'S SIMON STEENLAND HONOURED WITH A WELL-EARNED OAM

CONTRIBUTED BY JOAN PEASE MP

**Congratulations to Simon Steenland of Manly, Qld, on being awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM), in the King's birthday honours list, for services to youth and sailing.**

This award is a well-earned recognition of Simon's contribution to his adopted country, Australia, through his conception and creation (in 1993) and ongoing support of the Queensland Sail Training Ship, South Passage.

Coming to Australia from the Netherlands in the seventies, Simon forged a successful career in the building industry. At the bicentennial celebrations in Sydney in 1988, he noticed that Queensland was not represented by a tall ship. He decided to do something about it.

After first building a racing yacht out of aluminium to test the material, Simon engaged Brisbane naval architect, the late Rick James, to design the gaff schooner South Passage, based on the lines of 19th-century American pilot schooners.

South Passage was launched in 1993. With a crew of volunteers, he sailed the coasts of NSW and Queensland, canvassing schools and youth groups to engage in the youth development opportunities offered by crewing a sailing ship at sea. She's been operating

successfully ever since.

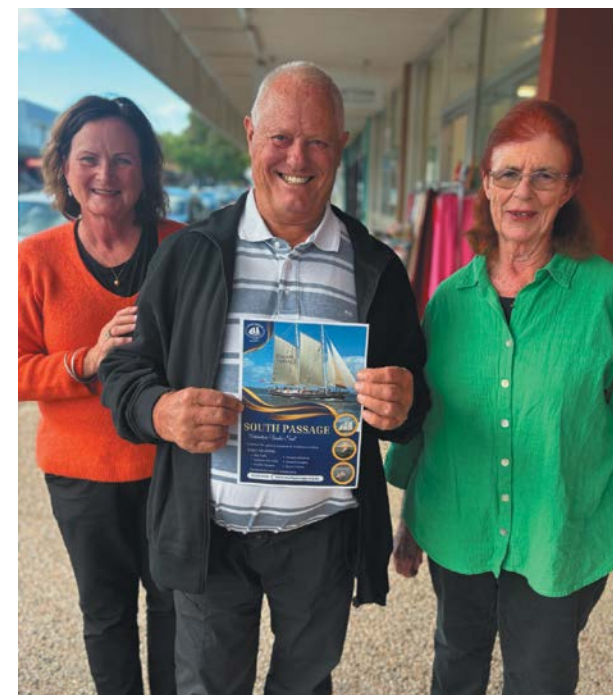
Although not involved in the day-to-day management of the ship, Simon maintains a keen interest in his creation and is always on hand to help resolve maintenance and operational issues.

His foresight, perseverance and leadership are inspiring to all those involved with South Passage.


Now owned and operated by the not-for-profit Sail Training Association of Qld Inc., South Passage has provided tens of thousands of young Australians with life-lessons in resilience, perseverance, teamwork and leadership through the youth development program known as South Passage – Adventure under Sail.

She has also provided a social outlet, camaraderie, purpose and life skills to hundreds of volunteer crew members over her 33 years of continuous operation, not to mention furthering the marine careers of numerous professional crew members.

All those who have sailed on South Passage would, no doubt, like to sincerely thank Simon for the opportunity he has given them to improve their lives, and congratulate him on this well-deserved award.



Joan Pease MP (left) with Simon Steenland OAM. Photo: Supplied.




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3



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# YOUNG AUTHORS PEN TALES OF WONDER IN NEW ANTHOLOGY WONDROUS TALES: STORIES FROM THE MAD HATTERS BOOKSHOP

The Mad Hatters Bookshop in Manly has released its third anthology, *Wondrous Tales*, featuring 17 stories and poems written by young authors aged eight to 14 from the local area and beyond. Centred on the theme of Wonder, it features a range of genres from fantasy and historical tales to mystery. It also includes two poems and a creative retelling of Alfred Noyes' *The Highwayman*.

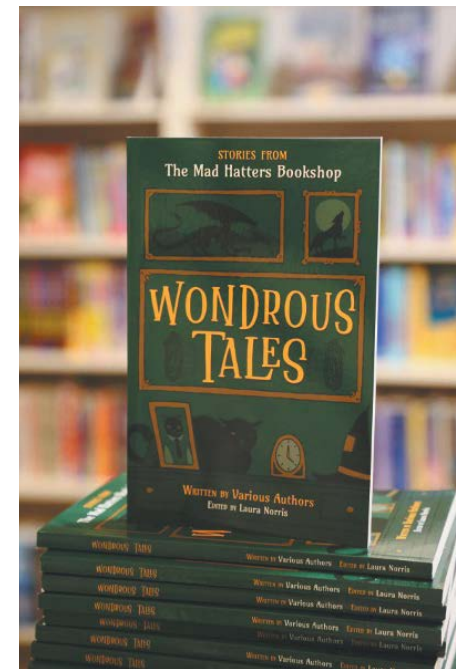
"We're in the age of ChatGPT and dwindling attention spans, so it was lovely to see how many kids were happy to sit down and write a story," said Laura from The Mad Hatters Bookshop.

"I was really impressed with the hard work and creativity of the authors and with how widely they interpreted the theme – there are traditional heroes' quest stories, time travel, portal fantasies, and more. I hope this book will be a stepping stone for their future writing journeys."

Jonathan Chesterman's story was inspired by *Rowan of Rin* by Emily Rodda. *The Dragon on Death Mountain* is about a young hero who climbs a nearby mountain to defend his town, but faces challenges along the way. Jonathan was excited to see his writing published, describing it as giving him "bragging rights".

Olive Bergan's inspiration was her cat, Kierra, who features as the main character of her story. In *The Secret Life of Kierra*, Kierra discovers a Secret Cat Society functioning in the wardrobe of her family home. Olive's story was well received at school, where classmates "wanted the book so [she] could sign it".

*Wondrous Tales: Stories from The Mad Hatters Bookshop* (RRP \$14.99) is available to purchase at The Mad Hatters Bookshop in Manly Harbour Village.



Young authors at The Mad Hatters Bookshop with copies of *Wondrous Tales*. Photos: Supplied.



## Zoe O'Connor

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# What's On

If you're looking for something to do locally, check out The Community Leader's What's On page here and online.

SCAN TO LEARN MORE ABOUT **WHAT'S ON**



4 JUL

## FREE MOVIE IN THE PARK – SCOOBY DOO

Saturday July 4, movie commences at sunset, Little Bayside Park, Manly

July's free, family-friendly movie in the park at Manly is the canine adventure, *Scooby Doo*. Movie goers can bring chairs or picnic rugs, enjoy music from 4:00pm, and pick up dinner from nearby eateries. Pets on leads are welcome to join the fun. The movie begins at sunset, and early arrival ensures a great spot and time for kids to dance before the show.



10 JUL

## TWILIGHT ON CAMBRIDGE

Friday July 10, 5:00pm to 8:00pm, Cambridge Parade, Manly Harbour Village

Twilight on Cambridge will again light up Manly on Friday, July 10, with an evening full of flavour, music and fantastic community vibes! Cambridge Parade will transform into a lively hub where locals and visitors can wander, taste and enjoy everything this bayside precinct has to offer. Food lovers can graze their way through an enticing selection of food stalls and food trucks, or settle in for a relaxed dine-in experience at one of Manly's many restaurants and bars.



15 JUL

## SENIORS' MORNING TEA AND CHAT

Wednesday July 15, 9:30am to 12:00pm, Wynnum Library, 145 Florence Street, Wynnum

This Seniors' Morning Tea and Chat invites older community members to enjoy a relaxed morning of conversation, connection, and light refreshments. Attendees can meet local organisations, which may include the Seniors Enquiry Line, Services Australia (FIS), Live Up, and Advance Care Planning Australia, to learn about helpful programs and supports. This is a welcoming space for socialising and staying informed. For more information, scan the QR code.



26 JUL

## GROWING ORGANIC, HEALTHY FRUIT TREES WORKSHOP

Sunday July 26, 10:00am to 12:00pm, Cox Park, Richard Street, Lota

A hands-on workshop is coming to Cox Park, Lota, where horticulturalist Doreen Jachmann will guide participants through the essentials of growing organic, healthy fruit trees. Designed for adults, this free session explores feeding routines, watering techniques, and natural pest prevention – everything fruit trees, including citrus, need to thrive. Attendees will walk away with practical skills to keep their trees vigorous, resilient, and producing abundant harvests. Bookings are essential and can be made by texting Jenny from Bethania Street Community Garden Inc at 0439 048 585. Scan the QR code for more information.



## JAN POWERS FARMERS MARKETS – MANLY

1st & 3rd Saturdays in July, 6:00am to 12:00pm, Little Bayside Park, Manly

Fresh produce, ocean breezes, and unbeatable community vibes – the Jan Powers Farmers Markets pop up at Little Bayside Park, Manly, on the first and third Saturdays of the month. Locals and visitors flock to the waterfront for farm-fresh fruit and veg, artisan treats, and gourmet bites. It's the perfect spot to grab a coffee, meet the growers, and soak up the sunshine.



## GREAZEFEST 2026

July 31 to August 2, Redland Showgrounds, Cleveland

GreazeFest is celebrated as Australia's ultimate rockabilly and hot rod weekend, drawing thousands for three days of high energy kustom kulture. The event brings together cool cars, rockabilly bands, DJs, pinups, vintage bikes, art, markets, and nonstop entertainment. Visitors can soak up the atmosphere, enjoy incredible live music, and experience the rockin' spirit of kustom kulture with a single day visit or a full weekend pass.

# EVERY STEP MATTERS: JOIN THE MND RESEARCH WALK/RUN AT SLEEMAN

Members of the local gym Pace at Sleeman are gearing up for a walk/run on August 23 to raise vital funds for Motor Neurone Disease research. Held at Sleeman Sports Complex, the MND Research Walk/Run welcomes participation from anyone who is able to complete the 2.5km loop or simply walk for an hour.

Motor Neurone Disease remains one of Australia's most devastating neurological conditions. In 2025, an estimated 2,800 Australians were living with MND, with two people diagnosed and two people lost every single day. The lifetime risk sits at 1 in 300, and the median survival time after diagnosis is just 2.5 years.

For the Pace at Sleeman community, the fight against MND hits close to home. In 2020, the group lost member David Keys after an 18-month battle. Earlier this year, Moira Rose received her diagnosis and now faces the toughest challenge of her life.

With no cure currently available, awareness and research funding are vitally important. The University of Queensland's MND and FTD research team continues to work towards breakthroughs in treatment and understanding of the disease. Every step taken in this event will make a contribution to research funding, which will hopefully, one day, lead to a cure.

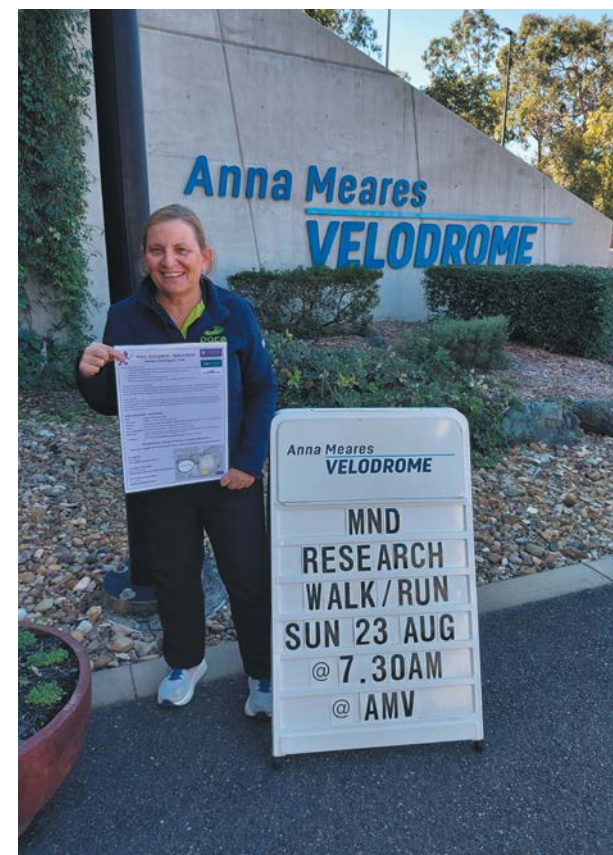


Photo: Supplied.

## MND RESEARCH WALK/RUN

**When:** Sunday 23 August 2026.

**Start time:** 7:30am (finish by 8:30am).

**Where:** Anna Meares Velodrome, Sleeman Sports Complex (Car Park P1).

**The course:** 2.5km loop around AMV and BMX Centre pathways.

**The distance:** You can walk or run any distance for up to one hour.

**Afterwards:** From 8:45am at the Aquatic Café – light food provided; drinks and extras available for purchase.

To register, email [chris.say@sleemansports.com.au](mailto:chris.say@sleemansports.com.au) by 15 August.

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# ROLL ON UP TO WYNNUM FRINGE FOR WORLD-CLASS ENTERTAINMENT

FROM WYNNUM FRINGE

**Wynnum Fringe’s extensive and exciting world-class program of live entertainment has something for everyone, from music to comedy and circus. Have you got your tickets yet?**

*Elixir Revived* by Head First Acrobats is a thrilling blend of circus artistry, comedy, and storytelling that demonstrates why the company has won awards at fringe festivals worldwide. Set around four scientists searching for the elixir of life, the production cleverly combines a playful narrative with breathtaking acrobatic feats, creating a show that is as entertaining as it is impressive.

The performers showcase remarkable strength, precision, and trust, while their cheeky humour keeps the audience engaged throughout. Rather than relying solely on spectacle, *Elixir Revived* uses its storyline to give purpose to each stunt and act. The result is a fast-paced, energetic production that balances laughter, suspense, and athletic excellence, leaving audiences both amazed and thoroughly entertained.

And then there’s *All Star Circus*. This promises to be an unforgettable family outing during the July school holidays, performed by the award-winning Head First Acrobats! The show combines world-class acrobatics, aerial performances, juggling, and laugh-out-loud comedy, delivering nonstop entertainment from start to finish.

The talented cast showcases incredible strength, skill, and precision while maintaining a playful energy that keeps young audiences fully engaged. There is plenty of humour and incredible artistry for the adults as well; this show delivers as much for the mums and dads as it does for the kids. As families search for memorable holiday experiences, *All Star Circus* stands out as a thrilling live event that celebrates creativity, teamwork, and the incredible physicality of acrobatics, ensuring everyone leaves inspired, amazed, and smiling.

For tickets, go to [wynnumfringe.com](http://wynnumfringe.com).



Photo: Supplied.



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# Maggie's Mates

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Photo: Supplied.

**What's your name?** Hello, my name is Snoopy.

**Suburb:** I'm from Wynnum West.

**How long have you lived in Wynnum West?** For eight years, though, I have been visiting my extended family here since 2008.

**What is your favourite local walk?** As an elderly doggo (18 years), I enjoy having my owners take me for walks in a wagon,

and then getting out for a sniff at the electricity pole at the end of my street. It has the best smells. The Wynnum waterfront is also a top place I like for a wagon walk.

**What is your most treasured toy?** Ellie the elephant. I got her for Christmas a few years ago, and promptly gave her a makeover by removing all her stuffing and her squeaker.

**What is your favourite food?** CHICKEN! Hands down the best food in the world.

**What is your worst habit?** If my family play a board game on the floor, I will find a way into the middle and sit on top of the game they are playing.

**What's your favourite local hangout?** My Nanna's house. I get the royal treatment there.

**Who is your best doggo friend?** Bella, who lives at Nanna's house, even though she doesn't like to share. Also, my brother

Chimmy, who is technically a guinea pig. He likes a wagon walk with me.

**Any funny or embarrassing stories you'd like to share?** When my family puts a mat on the floor for exercise I immediately sit on it and claim it as my own, and they have to get another mat. Also, if someone scratches behind my ears, I demand to sniff their hand immediately after.

**What do people love most about you?** My cute face, being named after a celebrity, and my big personality for a little dog.

**Snoopy's favourite charity is RSPCA QLD, and we have made a \$50 donation on his behalf. Snoopy says he was rescued as a puppy and his family is so thankful to the organisations that cared for him until he was united with his forever family.**



Would you like your best mate to be featured in Maggie's Mates? Email us at [sales@market2market.com.au](mailto:sales@market2market.com.au) and we'll send you a questionnaire. We will donate \$50 to a registered animal charity of your choice for each profile published in The Community Leader.

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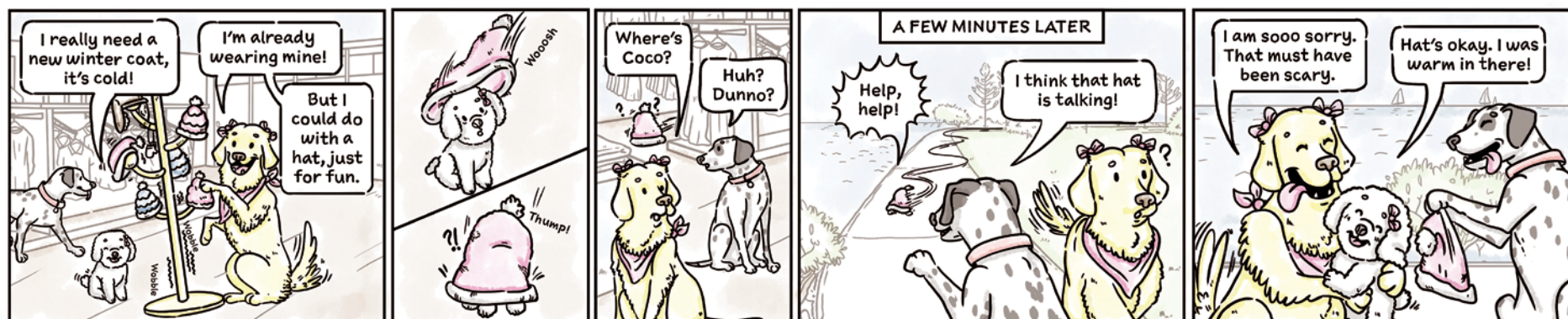
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# MISS MAGGIE OF MANLY



## MANAGING ARTHRITIS IN PETS

BY DR NICKY THOMAS, WYNNUM MANLY VETERINARY HOSPITAL

Arthritis is a chronic, degenerative disease of the joints with no cure. Management requires a combination of medication, physical therapy and weight control. There are a number of medications and supplements that may help alleviate the pain and cartilage degeneration associated with arthritis.



### CARTILAGE SUPPORT/CHONDROPROTECTANTS

The body has natural mechanisms that help to rebuild damaged cartilage and improve muscle mass. These mechanisms require raw materials that can be provided as nutritional supplements. Glucosamine and chondroitin sulphate are two compounds derived from shellfish, sharks and other animals that can help to protect and repair damaged cartilage. These substances are most useful before cartilage damage is too severe.

### NON-STEROIDAL ANTI-INFLAMMATORY MEDICATIONS (NSAIDS)

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications work by decreasing the production of prostaglandins, which are mediators of inflammation and pain in the joints. NSAIDs provide both a pain-relieving and anti-inflammatory effect and are generally the cornerstones of arthritis management in pets. NSAIDs may have effects on kidney and liver function, so their use should be monitored with blood tests. NSAIDs are a prescription medication – your vet will be able to discuss the most appropriate option for your pet.

### ALTERNATIVE PAIN RELIEF MEDICATIONS

There are a number of different pain relief medications that your vet may discuss with you if your pet is unable to tolerate NSAIDs or requires additional pain relief. These include medications that help to alleviate neurological and spinal pain, and others that reduce “wind-up” pain, may be suggested by your vet.

### ANTI-INFLAMMATORY SUPPLEMENTS

There are a number of supplements available that may provide additional anti-inflammatory relief. Green-lipped mussel extract, omega fatty acid supplements and cannabidiol oil have all been utilised in the management of arthritis.

### INJECTABLE POLY-SULPHATED GLYCOSAMINOGLYCANS (PSGAGS)

These medications help repair cartilage, reduce inflammation, and lubricate joints. Your vet can advise you whether these medications may be useful for your pet.

Book a consultation with your vet to discuss the best arthritis management plan for your pet.

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# MANLY HARBOUR VILLAGE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPDATE

BY JEMANDA HANNOUF, PRECINCT COORDINATOR, MANLY HARBOUR VILLAGE

## TWILIGHT ON CAMBRIDGE FRIDAY 10 JULY

The much-loved Twilight on Cambridge event is set to return, inviting residents and visitors to enjoy an evening of music, food and community spirit in the heart of Manly.

As the sun sets, Cambridge Parade will transform into a vibrant destination where the sounds of talented local musicians fill the air and diners can savour the diverse flavours offered by our outstanding local eateries. Whether you're looking for a relaxed family dinner, a catch-up with friends or simply a chance to enjoy the atmosphere, Twilight on Cambridge offers something for everyone.

Visitors are encouraged to explore local restaurants, cafés and food venues, supporting the businesses that contribute so much to the character and vitality of the precinct.

Adding to the festive atmosphere, live music will create a lively soundtrack for the event, while family-friendly entertainment ensures younger visitors can join in the fun. The combination of great food, live music and a welcoming community atmosphere makes Twilight on Cambridge a highlight of the local events calendar.

Twilight on Cambridge is more than just an evening out, it's an opportunity to connect with neighbours, support local businesses, and celebrate the vibrant culture that thrives within our community.

Bring your family, gather your friends and join us for a memorable twilight experience as Cambridge Parade comes alive at dusk.



## MOVIES IN THE PARK

Enjoy a free outdoor movie night under the stars at Little Bayside Park on Saturday 4 July. Bring a picnic rug and settle in for a screening of *Scooby Doo*.



## UPCOMING MARKETS



**SATURDAY 4 AND 18 JULY**  
Jan Powers Farmers Market



**EVERY SUNDAY**  
Manly Creative Markets

For more information on upcoming events, be sure to follow Manly Harbour Village on social media, and subscribe to our newsletter at [manlyharbourvillage.com](http://manlyharbourvillage.com).





LORD MAYOR ADRIAN SCHRINNER

# CR ALEX GIVNEY

COUNCILLOR FOR WYNNUM MANLY WARD



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## UPDATES FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNCILLOR



### Kitchener Park Renaming: Honouring Lionel Morgan

A proposal is currently being considered to rename Kitchener Park in Wynnum as Lionel Morgan Park, recognising the remarkable contribution of Lionel Morgan AM to both rugby league and the local community.

A proud Wynnum local, Lionel played more than 100 games for Wynnum Manly, represented Queensland on 12 occasions and became the first Aboriginal player to represent Australia in rugby league. He was later inducted into the NRL Hall of Fame and later awarded a Member of the Order of Australia.

Beyond his sporting achievements, Lionel was a respected community leader who played an important role in advancing opportunities and advocacy for Indigenous Australians in the Bayside.

His legacy continues to inspire generations both on and off the field.



Artist impression

### Lindum Rail Crossing Upgrade Moves Forward

Work is set to begin on the next stage of the long-awaited Lindum Rail Crossing Upgrade, with Energex commencing underground electrical cable relocations from mid-June. These early works mark an important milestone in preparing the site for the major upgrade, which is expected to begin construction in 2027.

The project will deliver significant safety improvements for residents, motorists, pedestrians and cyclists. Key features include realigning the rail crossing to improve visibility and safety, reducing approach speeds, installing new traffic signals integrated with Queensland Rail boom gates, and improving pedestrian and cycling connections through the precinct.

This project has been many years in the making and will require close coordination between Brisbane City Council, the Queensland Government, Energex and other stakeholders due to the complex infrastructure within the area.

I know many residents are eager to see progress, and it is fantastic to see works now underway on this important project that will help make the Lindum precinct safer and more connected for our community.



### Wynnum Choral Society Celebrates 100 Years

The Wynnum Choral Society is celebrating an incredible 100 years of music, friendship and community connection.

Since 1926, the choir has been enriching the Bayside through performances and bringing people together through a shared love of music. The recent Centenary Variety Concert was a fitting celebration of this significant milestone.

To learn more or enquire about joining, contact [choirwynnum@gmail.com](mailto:choirwynnum@gmail.com).



### Save the Date: Bayside Spring Festival

Mark your calendars for the return of the Bayside Spring Festival on Friday 11th September to Sunday 13th September 2026.

This much-loved community event will once again bring together local businesses, community groups, live entertainment, food and family fun in the heart of the Bayside.

Businesses interested in sponsorship opportunities are encouraged to contact my office at [wynnummanly.ward@bcc.qld.gov.au](mailto:wynnummanly.ward@bcc.qld.gov.au) to learn more.

STAY IN THE LOOP! SCAN THE QR CODE TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR E-NEWSLETTER



3403 2180 [WynnumManly.Ward@bcc.qld.gov.au](mailto:WynnumManly.Ward@bcc.qld.gov.au) @CrAlexGivney 3A, 212 Bay Tce, Wynnum (Monday to Friday 8am - 4pm)

# POOS AND LOOS

BY DR ROGER DOWN, MBBS, FRCS, FRACS, MD (LOND)

**Much embarrassment and social prejudices surround ‘number 2s’. There is no need for this; besides, we all do them, even the PM. As a result, most people never look in the loo afterwards!**

Let’s be grown-ups. It is essential that every one of us looks at the stools we have just passed. Why? It may save your life. Bowel cancer is currently the number one killer cancer, but it needn’t be. If we would only look and see: is there any blood in the stool or discolouring of the water?



Please, never use ‘blue tablets or agents’ that create a pleasant smell or colour in the toilet pan water. It disguises – and makes it very unlikely, for you to see any blood, unless it is profuse. Blood in or around the stool can be a sign of bowel cancer. You **MUST** be referred to a specialist colorectal surgeon for investigation and treatment.

The cause may be only a benign fissure or piles, both of which can be easily treated there and then by the colorectal surgeon in the consultation room. Gastroenterologists do not treat these very common conditions. They must be treated and cured to prevent further bleeding.

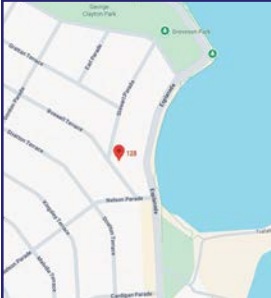
People must never be left bleeding from the bowel, even if a colonoscopy shows no cancer or polyps. It may develop later.

However, the presence of blood, particularly dark blood mixed with or around the stool, is an indicator of a potentially serious pathology higher up in the rectum or colon. The darker it is, the higher up the lesion is.

A colonoscopy is essential to determine the presence or absence of cancer in the large bowel. Small bowel cancer, which is very rare, does not result in visible blood.

See you next month, and God bless.






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# JOAN PEASE'S COMMUNITY UPDATE

STATE MEMBER FOR LYTTON



## GRANTS FORUM ON AUGUST 6

Get ready to join us at the Bayside Grants Forum 2026! This important annual forum will take place on Thursday 6 August at the Wynnum RSL Club.



It's an opportunity to learn about the latest grants available for your organisation, community group or charity. Come network with other like-minded individuals and gain valuable insights from government and industry presenters.



Whether you're a seasoned grant writer or just starting out, this event will help benefit you and your community organisation.

To RSVP, simply scan the QR link above or go to: <https://events.humanitix.com/baysidegrantsforum>

## TWO BAYSIDERS RECEIVE KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

Congratulations to two outstanding Baysiders, Simon Steenland OAM and David Westlake OAM, who were recognised in the 2026 King's Birthday Honours.



Simon (pictured) received his OAM for outstanding service to youth and sailing. As a driving force behind South Passage, he has helped thousands of young Queenslanders build confidence, resilience and leadership skills through life-changing experiences at sea. His dedication has left a lasting legacy for generations of young people.

David was recognised for decades of community service through the Wynnum Manly Districts Men's Shed, as a Justice of the Peace, and as a volunteer school bus driver. His commitment to helping others has enriched the lives of countless Baysiders.

## KEEP YOUR FOOD DONATIONS COMING

A huge thank you to everyone who has contributed to our Rosies food donation bin. Your generosity is helping provide essential support to people doing it tough in our community. Please keep the donations coming – every item makes a difference.



You can drop donations into my electorate office at 100 Edith Street Wynnum during office hours: Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 4.00pm. Together, we can continue supporting those most in need.

## DARLING POINT SPECIAL SCHOOL OFFICIAL OPENING

The new Darling Point Special School Manly Campus officially opened!

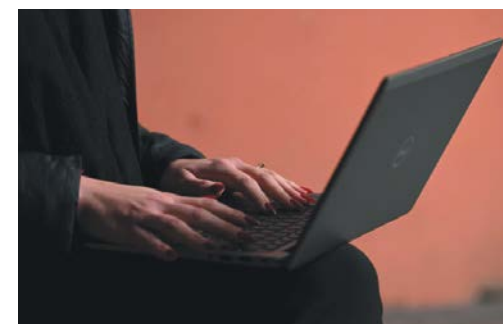
This Big Build Project is about so much more than bricks and mortar. It's about creating opportunities, fostering inclusion and ensuring local children with disability have access to modern, purpose-built facilities where they can learn, grow and thrive.

A heartfelt thanks to Principal Charmaine Driver, the dedicated staff, parents and school community whose passion and advocacy helped bring this vision to life. Your commitment is inspiring. Most importantly, congratulations to the students. This is your school, your space and your future!



## LOCAL DIGITAL PRIORITY PROJECTS GRANTS

Applications have opened for Queensland's \$50 million Local Digital Priority Projects grant program. The program is a joint investment by the Federal and Queensland Governments designed to improve access to essential online services, bridge the digital divide for vulnerable Queenslanders and empower communities throughout SEQ with improved connectivity.



Applications can be made by eligible local governments, industry, public and private entities and not-for-profits. The program will support projects that improve digital connectivity, build digital skills and drive high-skilled job creation. Applications are open now and close on 24 August. For more go to: [www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/support-services/financial/grants/local-digital-priority-projects](http://www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/support-services/financial/grants/local-digital-priority-projects).

**JoanPease MP**

State Member for Lytton

Authorised by Joan Pease 100 Edith Street Wynnum

PO Box 719, Wynnum QLD 4178

(07) 3915 1100

JoanForLytton

lytton@parliament.qld.gov.au

www.joanpease.com

# UNFORTUNATELY, COPPER THEFT IS ON THE RISE, AND IT AFFECTS ALL OF US

Crime Stoppers Queensland (CSQ) has joined forces with Brisbane City Council to address the rising issue of copper theft, launching a coordinated effort to raise awareness and encourage community reporting.

This partnership responds to an increase in incidents across Queensland, where copper theft continues to impact critical infrastructure, public spaces, and community assets. Through this initiative, CSQ and Council are working together to educate the public on the risks, improve visibility of the issue, and reinforce the importance of timely reporting.

Copper theft is not just a property crime. It has real consequences for communities. Damage to lighting and electrical systems can leave parks, roads and sporting facilities unsafe or unusable, with junior sporting clubs among the groups feeling the impact.

The campaign highlights how simple actions can make a difference, encouraging Queenslanders to stay alert and report suspicious behaviour in areas where copper infrastructure is present. Every piece of information received helps build a clearer picture and supports law enforcement efforts.

By combining partnership, awareness and community action, this initiative marks an important step in reducing copper theft and protecting the spaces Queenslanders rely on every day.



Crime Stoppers Queensland Chair Ian Stewart AO APM and CEO David Hansen with Queensland Police Service representatives and Cr Lisa Atwood from Brisbane City Council's Dobby Ward at the launch of the campaign at Murrarie Recreation Reserve. Photo: Supplied.



## FAMILY OWNED REMOVALISTS



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# YOU CAN HELP RESTORE THE LOST SHELLFISH REEFS OF MORETON BAY

CONTRIBUTED BY OZFISH

OzFish is working hard to restore the amazing oyster reefs of Moreton Bay. Ninety-five per cent of this vital habitat has been lost since European settlement and we need to bring it back!

Come and join our band of committed volunteers at one of our working bees happening every second Wednesday and fourth Saturday of each month. The working bees commence at 8:00am. You will finish the working part of the session around 11:30am, then you're invited to stay for a simple BBQ and a short update/discussion on the project, wrapping up by noon.

You will be manufacturing Robust Oyster Baskets (ROBs) or other reef modules and filling these with washed oyster shell collected from oyster shuckers, seafood outlets and restaurants, ready for deployment into beautiful Moreton Bay. The ROBs are used as base structures for ground-breaking shellfish restoration projects in the bay.

Working bees take place at OzFish OysterWorld, our shell recycling location at 2 Whimbrel St, Port of Brisbane. Please remember to wear sun-smart clothing, shoes or boots that can take a bit of water, sunscreen, and a hat. If you have gloves, please bring them. Don't forget to bring plenty of drinking water and perhaps a snack.

For more information about OzFish, scan the QR code.



Photo: Supplied.

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# FROM SQUEAKS TO A SYMPHONY: LOCAL MUSIC GROUP INSPIRES YOUNG EARS

FROM WYNNUM WEST STATE SCHOOL

For many people, the word ‘recorder’ brings back memories of squeaky renditions of *Hot Cross Buns* in primary school. Like learning any instrument, those early efforts can be a little hard on the ears!

But when eight experienced musicians come together, performing recorder arrangements spanning Handel to John Williams, the result is something else entirely – rich expressive music that can be hauntingly beautiful and even inspiring.

Students in Years 3 and 4 at Wynnum West State School recently experienced this transformation during a performance by a local recorder ensemble. This dedicated group meets weekly, not for fame, but for the joy of making music together – an example of the opportunities within our local community.

Students described the performance as calming and peaceful, while others were fascinated by how pitch changed with the size of the instruments. Many were amazed at the musicians’ skill and memory, and all were impressed by the evident hard work.

Experiences like this highlight the value of local community groups. They provide enriching opportunities for young people to see what is possible beyond the classroom.

It was an inspiring morning. One teacher even admitted the performance had changed her long-held views on the instrument. “They were so beautiful,” she said. “Loved it.”



Photo: Supplied.



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# Expanding your outdoor living options, all year round

CONTRIBUTED BY PERGOLAS BRISBANE

A pergola is a functional and visually appealing addition to any home, creating an inviting outdoor space with protection from the elements. Whether used for relaxation, entertainment, or as a connection between different areas of your yard, a well-designed pergola adds value to your property while enhancing your lifestyle.

The benefits of a pergola include:

**Extended Living Space:** A pergola creates an outdoor area for dining, lounging, or entertaining guests.

**Shade and Weather Protection:** A pergola provides relief from direct sunlight while allowing airflow, making outdoor areas more comfortable. Depending on the design, it can also offer protection from rain.

**Increased Property Value:** A high-quality pergola enhances curb appeal and adds to your home's overall value.

**Versatile Design:** Custom-built pergolas can be tailored to match your home's style, with options in timber, steel, or aluminium.

At Pergolas Brisbane, we also build decks – a favourite outdoor feature for Australian homes, expanding living spaces for maximum enjoyment. A deck can be constructed to create an entirely new area or built in and around existing parts of your home.

And then there's the carport, which is more than just a parking space – it's a protective shield for your vehicle, caravan, or boat. We design and build custom carports that provide year-round protection from



the elements while enhancing your home's security and aesthetics. Whether you need a single carport, a double carport, or a custom-built structure, we create solutions that fit your needs perfectly.

The right addition to your home will add function, style and value, and we pride ourselves on being able to add all three!

We can help you create a luxury resort-style living area or a simple freestanding structure that works within your budget to suit your home's style. Find out more at <https://pergolasbrisbane.com.au>.

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- Do you prefer task or portfolio-based management systems?
- Are you happy with the level of communication between yourself and the Property Manager?
- Is sufficient maintenance initiated and undertaken promptly?
- Does the Agency subscribe to zero tolerance with rent arrears?
- Does the Agency offer a premier listing option on realestate.com and weekend OFI's?

**These are just some of the questions you should consider when contemplating making a change.**

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• Wynnum

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Queensland | Sotheby's

• Cleveland

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◆ Wynnum West


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◆ Wynnum

**\$700 per weekly**  
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## The Local Community Online

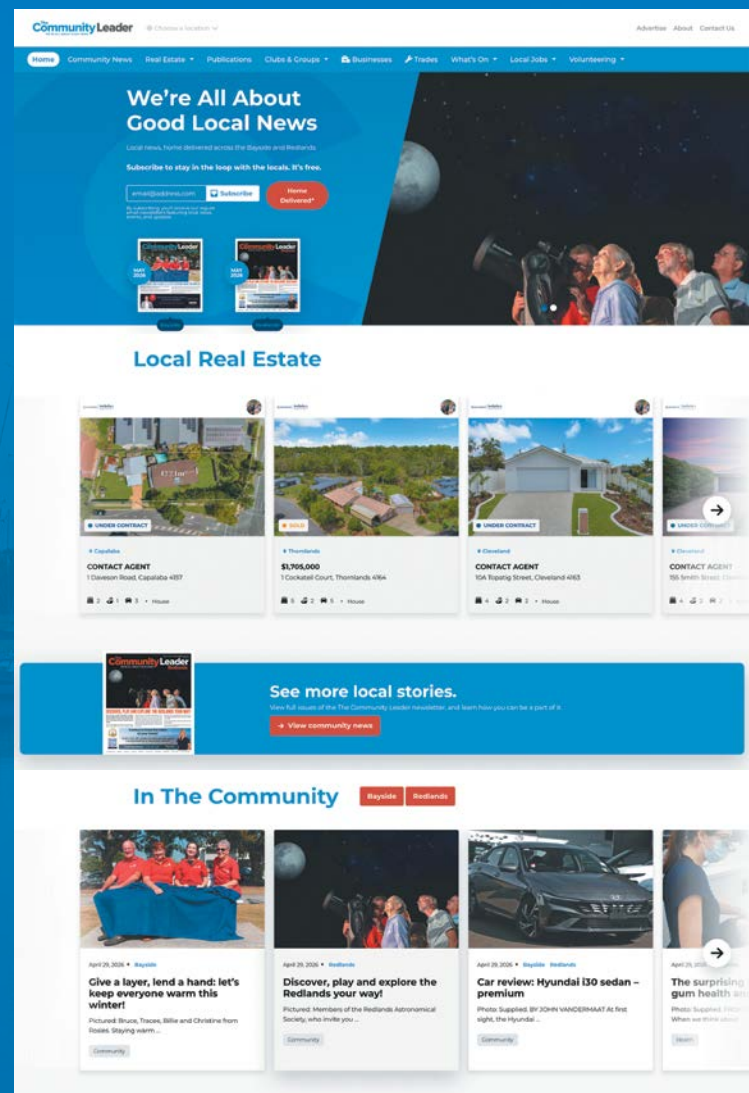
The **Community Leader** is not just another property portal, it's a trusted local hub where people find reliable community information, supported by one of Brisbane's largest print runs and home delivery\*. Our website content is focused on the corridor from **Mt Cotton to Camp Hill**, ensuring locals can easily access news and updates relevant to their area.

- LOCAL CLUBS
- LOCAL EVENTS
- LOCAL BUSINESSES
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**Ask your local agent about having your property featured on The Community Leader online.**

\* Delivery suburbs and streets are subject to change, however the total number of copies delivered each month remains constant. Houses on acreage and 'Australia Post Mail/No Junk Mail' signs cannot be delivered to. For full terms and conditions relating to home delivery, please visit the website of our distribution partner, IVE, here: <https://www.ivehub.com.au/public/legal/ive-distribution-general-terms.pdf>

[www.thecommunityleader.com.au](http://www.thecommunityleader.com.au)



# Open Day.

6 August



MORETON BAY BOYS' COLLEGE



# RQYS' GET ONBOARD BOAT EXPO RETURNS FOR A SPECTACULAR WINTER EDITION

BY ABIGAIL O'SULLIVAN

Boating enthusiasts, families, and locals looking for some weekend entertainment are invited to experience the best of the boating world as the Get Onboard Boat Expo returns to Manly's picturesque bayside precinct for its highly anticipated Winter Edition from Friday the 17th of July to Sunday the 19th of July.

Set against the stunning backdrop of Moreton Bay, the event will showcase a select range of boats, marine equipment, accessories, and lifestyle products, making it a must-visit destination for anyone passionate about life on the water. Whether you're looking to purchase your first boat, upgrade to a new vessel, or simply chat to some local Brisbane businesses, the Get Onboard Boat Expo offers something for every level of boating enthusiast.

Visitors can expect to see a diverse display of everything from Leopard Catamarans and Coast Marine Covers to generators with Zenith Engineering and of course, our friends at Yachtshare will have several boats on display for those considering a slice of something larger. Industry experts will be on hand throughout the event, providing advice, demonstrations, and insights into the latest trends shaping the boating industry.

On Saturday, the Treasures from the Bilge marine car-boot sale is also sure to be a hit, running from 9:00am-11:00am in the RQYS carpark. It's only \$30 to book a spot for your car, so if you have been meaning to clear out your garage of boating gear, head to our website and secure your space. If not, the event is open to the public so come and grab a bargain!

Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron's reputation as one of Brisbane's premier boating destinations makes it the perfect location for the expo. With its world-class marina facilities, waterfront dining, and relaxed coastal charm, visitors can enjoy everything the club has to offer before and after exploring the event. Why not reserve a table at the RQYS bistro for a delicious weekend long lunch?

Whether you're a seasoned sailor, keen marine observer, or simply looking for an enjoyable weekend activity for the whole family, the RQYS Get Onboard Boat Expo Winter Edition promises an exciting showcase of innovation, inspiration, and community. Mark your calendars for July 17-19 and prepare to discover the very best of boating this winter in Brisbane's beautiful bayside suburb of Manly!



Photo: Supplied.

**WHAT?** RQYS Get Onboard Boat Expo.  
**WHEN?** Friday 17th July 2026 from 3:00pm to 7:00pm, Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th July from 10:00am to 5:00pm.  
**WHERE?** Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron at 578 Royal Esplanade, Manly QLD 4179.



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Friday 17th July 2026  
3pm-7pm

Saturday 18th July 2026  
10am-5pm

Sunday 19th July 2026  
10am-5pm

## LOCAL FISHING WITH SPERO

# CHASING WINTER BITES: COLD MORNINGS ARE WORTH THE CATCH

BY SPERO KARTANOS

Well, if you wait long enough, the good fishing weather just might arrive in July, as June was not great at all.



Last month, there were the windy days, wet days, and freezing mornings... but we did get a few of those glorious warmer, sunny days, and I hope those continue in July, and the fish will be waiting to be caught.

Whiting will be starting to move back towards the Chain Banks, but the bigger fish should still be at Fisherman's Gutter (although they are not always easy to find), the Maroon Gutter and Hole, and Amity Banks, especially in the shallows with a good run in the tide. Close to home, just east of Darcy Light seems to be producing good whiting numbers in the winter months.

School mackerel should be in good numbers, but there are usually lots of undersized ones this time of year. The babies will have infiltrated the bay while the bigger ones are harder to get, and the bonito and small tailor will not give the bigger mackerel a chance.



Photos: Spero Kartanos.

I have found that floating pillies work best when this happens, and I get a few bigger fish.

Squire and snapper are in the bay around the spoil grounds north of Harries Artificial Reef. Mt Cotton Reach and the Bay Island drop-offs should be producing plenty of good fish. July is the last month before the August closure for snapper in the bay.

The cuttlefish and arrow squid should be firing in July with excellent numbers from east of Ormiston to St Helena, around the 23-30 ft mark. Red and silver-coloured jigs seem to work the best for whatever reason – use dull colours on cloudy days and bright colours on sunny days.

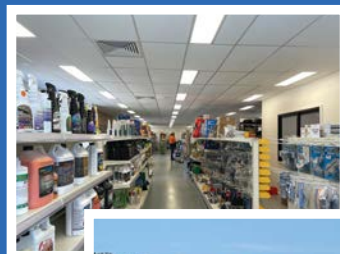
Until next month, good fishing!

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# BITE-SIZED BLOCKBUSTER JAWS FOR KIDS! BRINGS JAW-SOME ENTERTAINMENT TO WYNNUM FRINGE

The movie made a whole generation scared to go into the water, but a new version of *Jaws* coming to Wynnum Fringe is all about fun, not fear.

*Jaws For Kids!* is a comedy created for young children and families by Act React, a Brisbane-based company known for spinning hilarious homages to Hollywood blockbusters.

Their other shows include *Speed: The Movie, The Play; Titanic: The Movie, The Play; Die Hard: The Movie, The Play;* and *Love/Hate Actually*.

"We wanted to take what works so well with those big pop culture-inspired shows, and distil it into a performance designed especially for kids," said writer and performer Ellie Hardisty.

"There's something inherently fun about taking a suspenseful movie about a scary shark, making it playful and silly, and also adding in education about sharks and why they're important to our oceans."

Hardisty and fellow writer/performer Natalie Bochenski play two child-like characters re-enacting the movie's key points – trouble in the

water, the Amity Island mayor keeping the beach open, catching the wrong shark, and recruiting fearsome fisherman Quint to hunt down the great white.

"*Jaws* was released in 1975, which is now before many parents were even born!" Natalie said.

"But it's one of those movies that's deeply ingrained in popular culture, and we've been sure to include jokes adults will enjoy as well as the songs, dances and games for kids."

The show even has a specially-made giant shark head puppet deployed at key moments in the show.

"We get kids up to play characters in the movie, or to interact with the shark in other ways," Ellie said.

"Far from being scared, we find kids are raring to get into the water with us."

*Jaws For Kids!* Has four performances at the Lunchbox Theatre as part of the annual Wynnum Fringe Festival.



Photo: Supplied.

- Wednesday 8 July at 1.30pm
- Thursday 9 July at 1.30pm
- Friday 10 July at 1.30pm
- Saturday 11 July at 5.00pm

Tickets start from \$24.05 and are available at [wynnumfringe.com](http://wynnumfringe.com).

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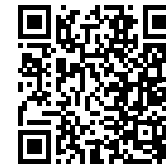
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# THE ULTIMATE IN SCHOOL HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT LIVE IN WYNNUM!

Looking for the ultimate family entertainment these school holidays? Wynnum Fringe has three spectacular shows taking over the Augathella Spiegel tent from 27 June to 12 July.

At 9:30am daily, **Party Animals** is a brand-new interactive disco adventure for young children and their grown-ups. Hosted by Marty the Monkey, this high-energy jungle-themed experience is packed with music, dancing, games, puppets, bubbles, balloons and plenty of laughs. Jungle and animal-themed dress-ups are encouraged for what promises to be the wildest kids' disco party in town!

At 11:00am daily, **The Greatest Magic Show** returns after delighting audiences across Australia and the UK. Starring award-winning magicians Sam and Justin, this is the feel-good family hit that combines mind-blowing illusions, hilarious comedy, audience participation, and high-end production with a whole lot of heart! Every child receives a free magic wand on entry and may even have the chance to join the action up on stage!

From 5-12 July at 12:30pm daily, **CIRCUS – The Show** brings a completely reimagined family circus experience to Wynnum. Featuring world-class illusions, tumbling acrobats, skilled jugglers, elegant aerialists, side-splitting comedy and a loveable clown with his gigantic six-foot balloon – this high-energy 60-minute spectacle has earned countless five-star reviews, international awards, and sold-out seasons worldwide!

All performances take place at the Augathella Spiegel tent, 166 Bay Terrace, Wynnum. Tickets are on sale now at [wynnumfringe.com](http://wynnumfringe.com).



Photo: Supplied.

# SCHOOL HOLIDAYS, SORTED.

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**CIRCUS**  
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# BAYSIDE SHELTER LOOKS TO PARTNER WITH AGENTS FOR CRISIS ACCOMMODATION

CONTRIBUTED BY BAYSIDE SHELTER INC.

**Bayside Shelter Inc. is calling on the local property sector to help jump-start its next operational phase, ahead of a targeted opening window of late 2026 or early 2027.**

Following the conclusion of its winter tax appeal, the organisation has announced it is looking to form strategic partnerships with real estate principals, property managers, and landlords across the Bayside region.

The partnerships will form a critical part of the charity's Community Grid framework, which was presented to local leaders at a community briefing in May.

Bayside Shelter Inc. founder Carly Ogborne said the decision to target existing housing stock came after extensive strategic planning.

"Our scoping determined that waiting for a traditional construction build would simply take too long when the need for crisis accommodation is so urgent," Ms Ogborne said.

"Instead, we are focused on taking advantage of existing housing stock already available in the market."

Ms Ogborne explained that funds raised from the organisation's recent tax appeal will directly bankroll the recruitment of a dedicated Property Coordinator to manage the process.

The incoming Property Coordinator will focus on collaborating with local agencies to secure and manage housing pathways and directly oversee property maintenance, risk management, and full tenancy compliance to ensure risk-free property protection for owners.

Ms Ogborne said the July rollout is an open invitation for local property professionals to collaborate on the practical integration of the Community Grid over the next six months.

"The operational framework is fully locked in, and now we are looking for the right industry partners to execute it with us on the ground," she said.



Photo: Supplied.

"We want to work with local agencies to see how these pathways map into their existing rental portfolios. Ultimately, we are looking for real estate partners who see secure housing not just as a market, but as the literal bedrock of a strong, thriving community."

To learn more about partnering with the property team or to register an expression of interest, email [baysideshelter@outlook.com](mailto:baysideshelter@outlook.com).

# ROCKABILLY, GLAD RAGS AND HOT RODS – GREAZEFEST IS BACK IN 2026

**GreazeFest is back, with all the colour, flamboyance and style that aficionados have come to love and expect. The distinctive, chrome-accented cars, the unmistakable fashions and the real driving force, rockabilly music, will fill the Redland Showgrounds from July 31 until August 2. GreazeFest director and aficionado-in-chief is Lorie Lee Cash.**

"Rockabilly music was born out of rhythm and blues and country music, but the concept of rockabilly now embraces the whole lifestyle. It was a brief period – from the mid-fifties to the emergence of rock and roll in about 1960, but it was a celebration of youth culture, the first time that teenagers were recognised as having their own tribe," says Lorie Lee.

The clothes styles for women were distinctive, bright and styled for dancing.

"Those full-circle skirts, almost the size of a tablecloth, were a reaction to the fabric shortages and restrictions of the war and immediate post-war years," she says. "Colours were being celebrated too, in the

wardrobe and in the home, and plastic was making an impact on everyday items and accessories."

The fashion styles have gone through a resurgence in popularity, and a whole new generation of rockabilly devotees is snapping up the frocks.

"You can buy the genuine vintage articles, or you can buy reproduction garments. With reproduction clothes, you've a better chance of getting your own size; collecting and wearing vintage clothing is another whole level of dedication to your hobby, as long as they're roomy enough to dance in!" says Lori Lee.

"When you put on your 'best threads' you feel fantastic, and it's a delight to see hundreds of people – including the musicians – presenting themselves in wonderful outfits. Even at the Hot Rod show, there's a costume; tucked-in T-shirts and denim jeans with rolled up cuffs. You can be whoever you want to be at events like GreazeFest!"

For more information on the music, the HotRod show, featured events and markets, go to [www.greazefest.com](http://www.greazefest.com).



Photo by Phil Kellow.

# WINTER APPLE, KALE & ROAST PUMPKIN SALAD RECIPE

So, when you think of winter dinners, salad probably isn't the first thing that comes to mind, but...this one is different, and it's simply delicious, easy to whip up and filling! And because kale is robust, the salad won't go soggy once dressed. Enjoy it as a side or add extra protein, such as roast chicken or grilled lamb.

## INGREDIENTS

### FOR THE SALAD

- 2 cups of shredded kale or spinach
- 1 cup of roasted pumpkin cubes (pop them in the oven with salt, pepper, and olive oil for about 30 minutes, or until tender and golden).
- 1 ripe apple, diced
- 1/3 cup dried cranberries
- 1/3 cup pomegranate seeds
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds (or chopped)
- 1/4 cup blue cheese, crumbled – we like gorgonzola, or you can use goat cheese if you prefer
- 3 to 4 slices of cooked bacon (fry it in a pan or pop it in with your pumpkin in the oven), chopped

### FOR THE DRESSING

- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp honey or maple syrup
- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard



## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Pop the kale in a large bowl that's big enough to hold all your salad ingredients.
2. Add the roasted pumpkin, diced apple, cranberries, bacon and blue cheese.
3. Whisk together the olive oil, vinegar, mustard, honey, salt and pepper in a small bowl, or put all the dressing ingredients in a jar, pop on the lid, then shake to combine.
4. Pour the dressing over the salad and toss gently to combine.
5. Sprinkle the finely sliced almonds and pomegranate seeds over the salad just before serving.

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## LOCAL READERS – A BOOK REVIEW

# CATCH 22 BY JOSEPH HELLER

BY ANNE CROWLEY

### WHAT THE EXPERTS SAID

“Set in Italy during World War II, this is the story of ... Yossarian, a hero who is furious because thousands of people he has never met are trying to kill him. But his real problem is not the enemy – it is his own army, which keeps increasing the number of missions the men must fly to complete their service. Yet if Yossarian makes any attempt to excuse himself from the perilous missions he’s assigned, he’ll be in violation of Catch-22, a hilariously sinister bureaucratic rule: a man is considered insane if he willingly continues to fly dangerous combat missions, but if he makes a formal request to be removed from duty, he is proven sane and therefore ineligible to be relieved.” Source: *Good Reads*.

### MY THOUGHTS

Themes of rampant capitalism, bureaucracy gone mad, corruption, hypocrisy, self-serving ambition, abuse of power, incompetence, and a chilling indifference to how all this affects those with less power, surround several versions of the Catch-22. Absurd and surreal – often humorous, but really not funny – the recurring question is: what is crazy?

The wordplay and descriptive precision are a big part of the enjoyment, for example: ‘Milo’s moustache was unfortunate because the separated halves never matched. They were like Milo’s disunited eyes, which never looked at the same thing at the same time. Milo

could see more things than most people, but he could see none of them too distinctly.’

The book moves in circles, with each return to its many characters adding depth and new perspectives, until key pieces finally fall into place – many tragically, one spectacularly. It is worth persevering through the length and apparently disjointed detail.

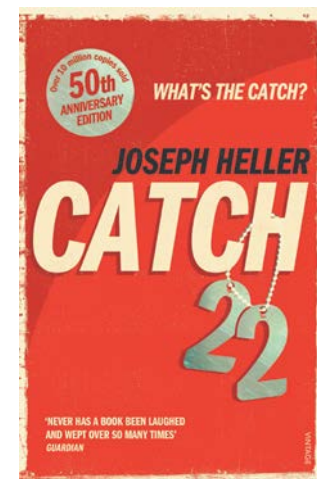
I first read *Catch-22* in the early 1980s when I was a student nurse, and I found the black humour hilarious. I still remembered ‘the soldier in white’, completely bandaged in hospital, with one bottle dripping clear fluid into a vein and another draining clear fluid from his groin; when the first was empty and the second full, they simply swapped them.

Another favourite was Yossarian’s censoring soldiers’ letters while avoiding bombing runs by feigning illness. To relieve the boredom, he invents rules: in some letters he deletes all personal pronouns; in others, everything between ‘Dear Mary’ and ‘Love, John’. Required to initial his work, he signs W.I. (Washington Irving) and, for a change, I.W. (Irving Washington) to avoid identification. That inspired me during my nursing training stint in Central Sterilising where I had to assemble and initial packs of surgical instruments. I told a fellow student, ‘I’m not stupid – instead of signing my name, I’ve been signing WI and IW.’ She replied, ‘I’m not stupid either – I’ve been signing your initials.’ We’ve been firm friends ever since!

Through my career in various bureaucracies, I have encountered several Major Majors – ‘Come and see me when I’m not here’ – leaders absent literally and/or figuratively when they should have been present. I have also experienced the dark side of people in power, nailed by Heller. That is one reason the novel still feels uncomfortably relevant.

On this second reading, while I still enjoyed much of the humour, I was shocked by the misogyny and treatment of women, which I’d failed to recall, as were my book club mates. We concluded that such attitudes had seemed ‘normal’ when we were young, which is unsettling in itself.

Two book club members reading *Catch-22* for the first time really enjoyed it. Most of us who re-read it did too, but felt its darkness more keenly now.



## LOCAL POETRY

# THE MEN’S GROUP

BY GEOFF SMILEY

From mysterious beginnings we meet without rules. Differences blunted, reaching out to each other through our histories and need.

Each of us is a drama if stories are fully told. The group represents a distraction while we live our fragile lives.

Topics of discussion vary from the past, health to cars, politics and wives. At times the strongest views

are from the least informed but we enjoy the encounters and sometimes get wisdom.

There is always the robust banter of men. Also, evidence of what is known as the “Fruits of the Spirit”

(although this might be denied)  
*Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control.* \*

This combination so rare

in a group of men, provides succour a unique wonder. A reprieve from what we often knew in those earlier times of swimming with the sharks.

Our strength is our years. No competition here. Just men relaxing in an accepting atmosphere. And giving back to the group that welcomes us.

\* Galatians Ch 5 Bible.  
© Geoff Smiley



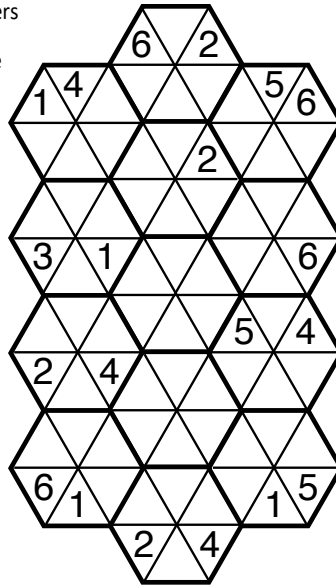
### Sudoku

Fill in the blank cells using numbers from 1 to 9. Each number can only appear once in each row, column and 3x3 block.

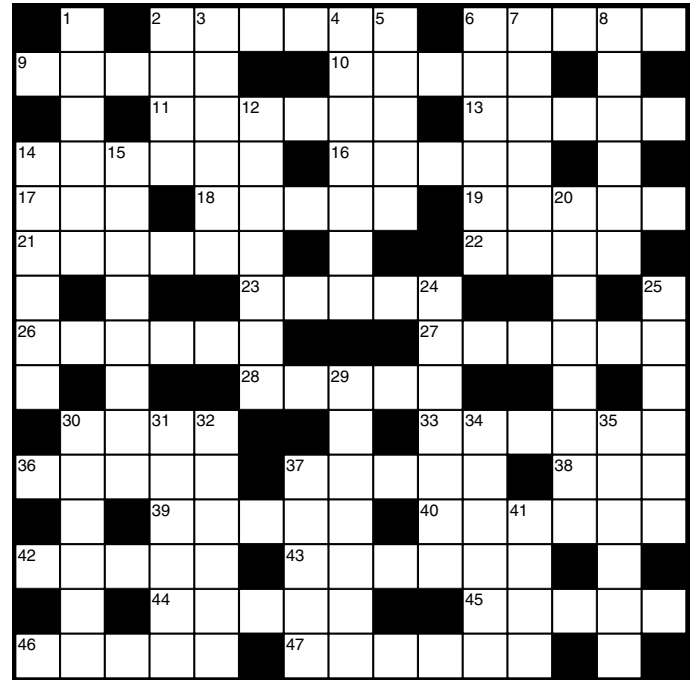
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|   | 8 |   | 4 |   | 2 |   |
|   | 4 |   | 8 |   |   | 5 |
| 1 | 2 | 5 |   |   |   |   |
| 9 |   | 3 |   |   | 5 |   |
| 5 |   |   |   |   |   | 7 |
| 8 |   | 6 |   |   |   | 3 |

### Quick Workout

Fit the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 into the hexagons so that where the hexagons touch, the numbers will be the same. No number is repeated in any hexagon.

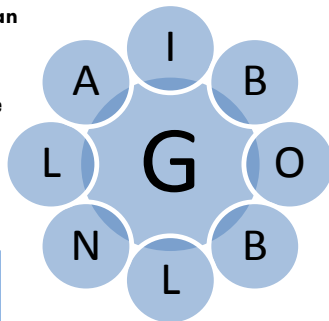


### Crossword



### Focus An All Australian Word Game

- \* Each word must contain the centre 'Focus' letter and each letter may be used only once
- \* Each word must be four letters or more
- \* Find at least one nine letter word
- \* No swear words
- \* No verb forms or plurals ending in 's'
- \* No proper nouns and no hyphenated words




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Reference: Macquarie Concise Dictionary  
Focus No. 3908

**TODAY'S** Good: 11 words  
**FOCUS** Very good: 20 words  
Excellent: 28 words

#### ACROSS

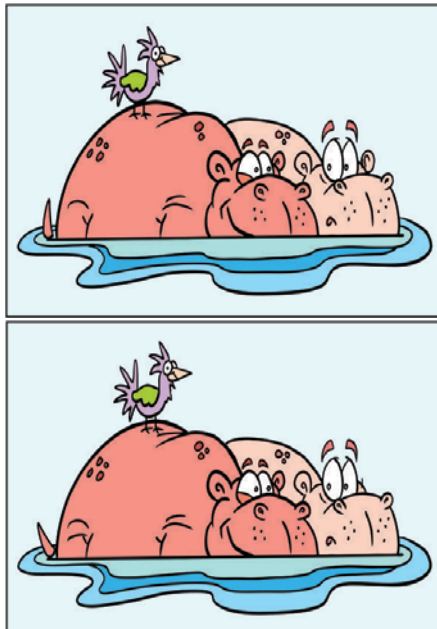
- 2 Burrowing carnivore
- 6 Long-tailed parrot
- 9 Employed
- 10 Restrict
- 11 Thrown
- 13 Makes fast a vessel
- 14 Be on guard
- 16 Gourd
- 17 Corn spike
- 18 Church office bearer
- 19 Sanity
- 21 Fold
- 22 Mine entrance
- 23 Quotes
- 26 Kit
- 27 Call for repeat
- 28 Of sound waves
- 30 Resting places
- 33 Division of Yorkshire
- 36 Burdened

#### DOWN

- 1 Extended in a line
- 2 Greek letter
- 3 Worships
- 4 Component
- 5 Added clause
- 6 Sensitive plant
- 7 Made up for
- 8 Apprehend

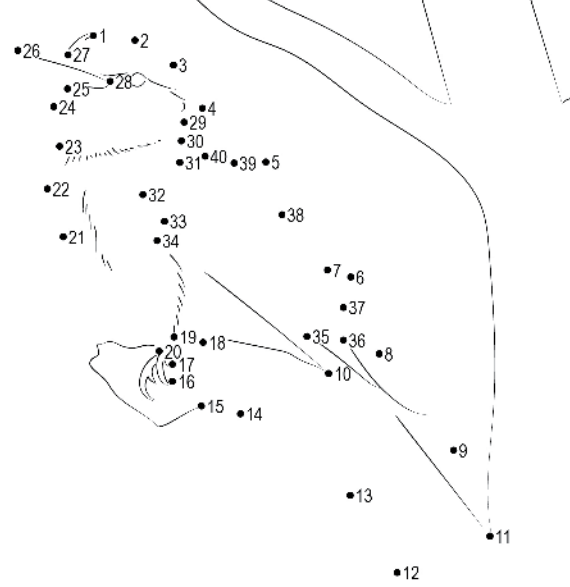
- 12 Picks out
- 14 Make summoning sign
- 15 Grappled
- 20 Poisonous alkaloid
- 24 Hide away
- 25 Condescends
- 29 Newborn child
- 30 Uses a tub
- 31 Mock
- 32 Traps
- 34 Takes effect
- 35 Tends the sick
- 37 Colour scheme
- 41 Sporting items

### Spot the 5 Differences



### Join the Dots

What is this? Find out by joining the dots.



### Solutions

Puzzles and pagination supplied by Auspac Media

**FOCUS:** aglio aijn aijn along baing baing BILLABONG  
bingo bong gain gail gailon gail glibon glib glob  
lobal goal goblin ling ling long lobbing log in long ngatio

**SPOT THE 5 DIFFERENCES:** Tail moved, bird moved, missing ear, extra leg wrinkle, extra freckle on back

**ACROSS**

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

**DOWN**

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
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| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|



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- CUSTOM JEWELLERY
- RHODIUM PLATING
- JEWELLERY CLEANING
- STONE RESETTING
- JEWELLERY REMODELLING
- PEARL RESTRINGING



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# QUEENSLAND'S BIGGEST TOUCH FOOTY CARNIVAL TO HOST 273 TEAMS!

BY JAN NARY

**“Visually, touch football is a great game; it’s fast, it doesn’t stop, and the players need skill, the ability to step out and find gaps, agility, teamwork and understanding of how to read a game. It’s high-paced and engaging, and to have it as an Olympic sport would be a dream – especially for Australia!”**

Rachael Stacey can be allowed some bias. As Manager of Commercial, Events and Strategy of Queensland Touch Football, her passion is understandable, especially so close to the Queensland Touch Football Junior State Cup.

Touch football grew out of rugby league – Rachael points out that some league stars have actually come from touch – but it has the advantage of being safer for younger and older players.

“Touch football provides perfect off-season training, and because it doesn’t have the collisions of other football codes, it’s great for young athletes and is a fantastic opportunity for older participants to come back to reconnect with teammates in a fun and active sport. We have

79-year-olds still taking to the field. That makes it versatile, so that you can have teams with grandparents, parents and children all playing in the same team,” Rachael says.

While some young players move on to other football codes, many stay with touch throughout their playing lives.

“They come in young and go up through all the different levels. You’d be hard-pressed to find the skill level in other codes because touch footballers have been able to play the sport from such a young age. The life cycle of a touch player can be a lot longer than many other sports.”

Junior teams, which boast an equal split of male and female players, go from under 10 to under 18 years old. This year will see a record 273 teams participating, a boost to the Redlands of about 16,000 people each day, from Townsville to South Tweed and out to Emerald. The Redlands Touch Football Association has a record representation of 23 teams.



*Junior players from Redlands Touch Association.*

“There’s a sin bin, but it’s rarely used,” says Rachael. “The whole event is a festival; it’s wonderful to see the smiling faces – the players and their parents – and it’s a fantastic day out for anyone who wants to see if touch football is the

sport for them!”

The 30th Queensland Junior State Cup will run from July 9 to 11 at the Redland Showgrounds and Henry Ziegenfusz Park.

# PUPPYPALOOZA: A CANINE CHRISTMAS IN JULY MARKET

BY ASHLEIGH HOWARTH

**Dog lovers, mark your calendars – the Redlands is about to go barking mad once again in the best possible way.**

A double dose of paws, play, and pure joy is heading your way with PuppyPalooza – hosted by the Redlands Coast Collective Markets – bringing together pet owners, pooches, and plenty of “aww” moments across two standout events this winter.

First up, a festive twist: Canine Christmas in July lands at Faith Lutheran College on July 12, promising a holly-jolly celebration, followed by the more relaxed Pups at the Pub at the Grandview Hotel on August 16.

Behind it all is organiser Nicole Kennon, whose love of dogs and markets inspired the popular events.

“Dogs are such an important part of the family, and with more people wanting to take them out on social outings rather than leaving them at home, that’s why we run this event,” she said.

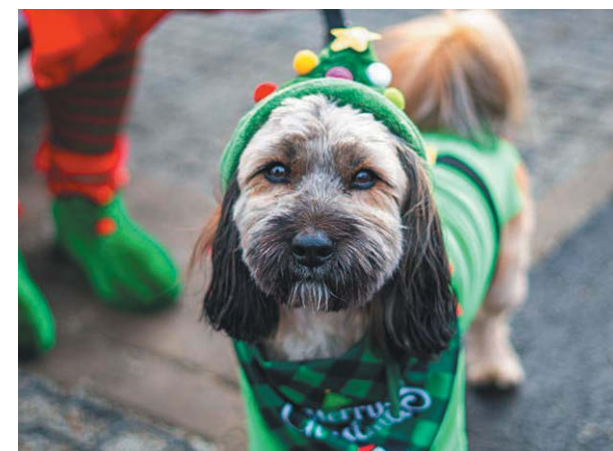
Billed as the “ulti-mutt tail-wagging experience,” PuppyPalooza features a mix of pet stalls, expert advice, activities and competitions.

“I have a mix of pet specialty vendors who sell everything you could possibly imagine from collars and harnesses to coats, little hats, toys, food, treats, bedding and more,” Nicole said.

“We also have a local vet who gives out great pet advice, a trainer who can teach you and your pup a cool new trick, and a professional pet photographer to capture some happy snaps.

“We have best-dressed competitions – with festive outfits encouraged for the Canine Christmas in July market – as well as a fun runway moment at Pups at the Pub.

“We will also have a best pub-named pup competition celebrating all the cheeky, boozy-inspired dog names like Whiskey, Pino and Chardonnay.”



Don’t have a dog? No problem! Everyone is welcome – whether you’re a proud pet parent, thinking about adopting, or just someone who loves to give out lots of pats.

# LOCAL NON-PROFIT COMMUNITY ORGANISATION PROFILE: HEART

FROM HEMMANT EQUINE AGISTMENT RIDING & THERAPY

**Just 10 kilometres from the Brisbane CBD, in the bayside suburb of Hemmant, a quiet but powerful kind of community connection is unfolding every day. At Hemmant Equine Agistment Riding & Therapy (HEART) horses are helping people build confidence, connection and a sense of belonging.**

A registered charity, HEART offers inclusive horse- and farm-animal-based programs for people of all ages and abilities. From horse-assisted learning and riding lessons to equine-assisted therapy, horsemanship, supervised volunteering and practical property skills, each program is designed to support physical, emotional and social wellbeing.

For some, that means Tiny Tot classes, where children learn balance, safety, respect and animal care in a fun and nurturing setting. For others, it is sensory-based movement therapy, confidence-building activities, or simply the joy of spending meaningful time outdoors with animals. HEART also creates memorable experiences for older members of the community, including residents from local retirement villages.

Horses facilitate the experiences. Honest and intuitive, they respond to human emotion and behaviour in a way that encourages calm, presence and trust.

What makes HEART particularly special is the community that surrounds it. Run entirely by volunteers, the charity has become a place where friendships flourish, and people feel valued, included and connected. Supported by local businesses, grants and donations, HEART offers something increasingly rare in a busy world: genuine connection – one horse, one interaction and one life at a time.

Get in touch with HEART at [hello@hemmantequine.org.au](mailto:hello@hemmantequine.org.au).



Photo: Supplied.

# DARLING POINT SPECIAL SCHOOL'S NEW LEARNING CENTRE IS NOW OPEN

FROM DPSS

**Wednesday June 10 2026, saw a crowd of over 430 people gather to celebrate the official opening by Minister for Education and the Arts, the Honourable John-Paul Langbroek, MP, of the new Learning Centre – Diligence and Resilience Wings – at Darling Point Special School.**

The official opening marks the next step along the school's journey of collaboration, partnership, creativity, audacity, and educational excellence for students with severe disabilities who are engaged in enthusiastic learning every day throughout the school.

Nearly 70 years ago, in 1958, an Opportunity School was established on the Manly site and later rebuilt in 1986 as the Darling Point Special School.

The celebration last Wednesday was supported by the Director-General of Education, Ms Sharon Schimming, other senior officers from the Department of Education, the Honourable Joan Pease MP –Shadow Minister for Small Business, Shadow Minister for Customer Service and Open Data, Member for Lytton, and Alex Givney, Councillor for Wynnum Manly.

The presence of no fewer than three Order of Australia members: Prof. Allan Parker (the school's scholar-in-residence), Mr Stan Plath, former Principal to Charmaine Driver and member of the Darling Point Special School Council, and Mr David Westlake, community leader

and mentor, demonstrated the school's strong reputation and the esteem in which the school's work with the most vulnerable school students is held.

As shared by School Council Chair, Michael Jullian, "Buildings are like people. Some are tall, some are pretty; this one is tall and pretty, but like people, no building is perfect, and like people, we are always trying to improve. What this purpose-built, state-of-the-art building does extremely well is allow people to interact, teach, learn, and be the best they can be. This school's philosophy of teaching is like this building, strong foundations, designed fit-for-purpose and well resolved via the rigorous application of great values and principles".

Principal, Charmaine Driver, took the opportunity to thank many contributors to the achievement recognised last Wednesday, including not only the Department of Education, the Queensland Government, the various members of the design, construction and project management team, but also Iona College, which since late 2022 have hosted half of the school's students and staff during demolition and construction, and ongoing for the time being.

Mrs Driver made mention that these two schools share a birthday – January 28, 1958, also her own first day at school – and now in a way, share a backyard through the special school's temporary Lindum campus whilst, as outlined by Minister Langbroek, the Queensland government progresses construction of additional special school



Photo: Supplied.

facilities across the state, to accommodate parent choice in schooling for their children.

Speakers and guests celebrated students as central to the Darling Point Special School's purpose, focus, and hope, confirming that without them, none of the excitement and delight experienced last Wednesday would have purpose.

Official proceedings concluded with students, staff, family members, and guests giving a rousing rendition of the school song, "Keep a Dream in Your Pocket," which, since 1993, has been an inspiration and a call to vitality, courage, and hope amongst the Darling Point Special School community.

# LOCAL GARDENING WITH KAT

## SOW SNOW PEAS!

BY KAT PEARSON, *GIRL IN THE GREEN*

Snow pea season should be in full swing! Even in my darkest veggie patch winters, when I haven't got time to care for anything, I always make sure to put snow peas in somewhere. They are so tasty and far too expensive at the shops! They're also the easiest winter crop. Well, once you get them growing...

Snow peas, like most legumes, much prefer to be sown directly – they don't like root disturbance, so just pop the seeds straight into the soil. They're pea-sized seeds, so easy to handle, and as long as you don't let them get too soggy before they sprout, they germinate reliably in a week or so. Unless, of course, you have a rat that keeps eating them. INFURIATING. I sowed snow peas (and sweet peas for that matter) weeks ago. And they never came up. I thought, maybe the seed was old, maybe they got too wet and rotted? I bought new seeds and tried again. Nothing. Except for little divots where my seeds had once been. Suspicious. Anxious not to miss out on my favourite garden snack, I bought a few punnets of seedlings and put them in.

But I really wanted to try the mammoth snow pea variety I had seeds for. Not to mention all the fancy (and not exactly cheap...) fragrant sweet pea varieties I had bought. So I found an old rat trap cage my husband had bought in an effort to be more 'humane' when said rats were living in our ceiling (not sure how humane it is if you don't ever check the trap – luckily it never caught anything). But in theory, if rats can't get out of the trap, they also cannot get into the trap, so why don't I put my punnets of seeds in the trap? Success! Granted, I could only fit three tiny pots, but they germinated. Now I do still have to transplant them, which isn't ideal, but oh well, life isn't ideal, and it won't kill them. I get my fancy peas and the knowledge that for a (very) brief period of time, it was Kat: 1, Rat: 0.



Photo: Kat Pearson.



 A colorful event poster for 'Fielder's Family Fun Day'. The background features a large, multi-colored inflatable structure. In the center, there are three circular inset photos: one of a child with a toy gun, one of two children with ice cream and face paint, and one of a child with face paint. The text 'FIELDER'S FAMILY FUN DAY' is written in large, stylized letters across the middle. At the bottom, there are several boxes containing event details and activities.
 

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**11:00 AM - 3:00 PM**  
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# MICROPLASTICS: A WORLD OF NOT-SO FANTASTIC PLASTIC

Plastic was hailed as a material that would change the world; waterproof, cheap, adaptable and offering a multitude of applications. But there's a cost. Dr Cassandra Rauert, QAEHS Senior Research Fellow (University of Queensland), is leading investigations into human exposure to micro and nanoplastics, and the outlook isn't good.

"We deliberately develop some microplastics, such as micro-beads for beauty products – though they're now banned in some countries – and anti-fouling paint that is designed to shed," she says, "but the main source of the problem microplastics are the larger pieces of hard plastic that break down into smaller and smaller pieces – and they're everywhere."

Plastics exposed to UV sunlight and hard plastic food containers exposed to heat – especially cheap food containers in microwaves – degrade into microplastics. Car tyres leave microplastics and a worrying array of chemicals on the road, which are washed into waterways. The tyres, crumb-processed into playground mats, carry the same chemical burden.

"Domestically, breathing and eating provide the two main pathways

into our body," says Dr Rauert. "The air carries fibres from synthetic nylon or polyester fabric, which can be particularly prevalent if we use an indoor-vented tumble dryer. Even filters will only block particles of a certain size, so synthetic fabrics are better dried on the line. Polypropylene carpets and synthetic curtains shed fibres, and some plastic kitchenware contributes to the burden."

Dr Rauert says that, as yet, we have only a limited understanding of how micro- and nanoparticles enter our bodies and what damage they cause, but there are demonstrated links between the chemicals in plastics and various medical conditions.

"We know that plasticisers, the additives that give plastic its flexibility, are endocrine disruptors that are associated with reproductive health issues. Improvements still have to be made in biodegradable plastics, which often need treatment in a specialist plant to break down properly," she says.

"The good news is that there are things we can do to make a difference – for our health and for the environment."



Dr Cassandra Rauert. Photo: Supplied.

**Dr Rauert will present a talk on microplastics and health on Monday, 20 July 2026, 10:00am - 11:00am at Capalaba Library.**

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# ST HELENA ISLAND: A WASTED TOURISM OPPORTUNITY

BY DR IAN PATTERSON, FORMERLY ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR IN TOURISM MANAGEMENT, UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

**With the Brisbane Summer Olympic Games only six years away, the Queensland Government has wasted an opportunity to restore a major tourism attraction: the St Helena Island Penal Settlement. You only have to compare it with Alcatraz Island off the coast of San Francisco. In 1934, the island was converted into a Federal Penitentiary and is now one of San Francisco's major tourist attractions, attracting between 1.2 and 1.7 million visitors annually.**

St Helena Island is located in Moreton Bay off the coast of Wynnum/Manly, approximately 21 kilometres east of Brisbane and 4 kilometres east of the mouth of the Brisbane River. The island has a rich history as an Aboriginal archaeological site: Aboriginal middens record that local Aboriginals visited the island to hunt dugongs and flying foxes and to gather shellfish.

Local Aboriginals called the island Noogoon, meaning the place of the flying fox. Local fishermen hunted dugong around the island for their meat and oil, which were exported to England for medicinal purposes.

The penal settlement between 1867 and 1932 was once described as the 'Hell hole of the Pacific'. The actual penal settlement was built by prisoners themselves, sinking wells, clearing scrub, quarrying stone for the stockade, and constructing surrounding buildings. In the beginning, a Superintendent and a staff of 12 wardens controlled 60 male prisoners, a number that increased to 300 by 1900.

The prisoners were kept busy by clearing vegetation and planting maize and vegetable crops. Sheep and cattle provided much of the island's food requirements. A sugar mill crushed over 75 tonnes of locally grown sugar by 1880. In the 1890s, trade workshops were established that taught carpentry, boot making, tailoring, saddle making and butchery.

Punishments were severe, such as the 'shot drill' where prisoners carried a 24 lb. cannonball continuously for an hour; leg irons were used; and solitary confinement in underground cells was sometimes used for the more uncontrollable prisoners. In 1891, there were 17 murderers, 27 guilty of manslaughter, and 26 incarcerated for stabbings and shootings among the prisoners.

St Helena housed several prisoners from the Australian Shearers Strike of 1890 who were sentenced to three years' imprisonment. These included Julian Stuart, George Taylor and William Hamilton, who later became Labor members of parliament. William Hamilton was elected President of the Queensland Legislative Council in 1920.

In 1921, the government announced that the prison was to be phased out and become a farm colony for well-behaved and trusted prisoners, and by 1932, the last prisoner left the island.

In 1979, the Island was gazetted as a National Park, and in 1980 as a Historic Area managed by the Department of Environment and Conservation for its historic value.

Between 1982 and 2025, a private operator ran a catamaran called the 'Cat o'Nine Tails' between the island and the mainland. However, in August 2025, it sank at its moorings in Manly Harbour. Since then, day tours are no longer available, and the island is now devoid of any visitors.

What a waste of a wonderful opportunity to show overseas visitors coming to Brisbane for the Olympic Games, the island that for 67 years was a penal settlement that housed over 300 prisoners. Unfortunately, many of the original buildings have been dismantled or destroyed; only 7% of the original structures remain, and those were built from beach rock or brick. The State Government or private entrepreneurs should invest in restoring and rebuilding the original structures based on the initial plans, to develop it as a working penal settlement that the tourism industry will be proud of.



Prisoner Stockade surrounded by a 14-foot wooden fence. Photo: Supplied.



The Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd (PBPL) is reviewing the Brisbane Port Land Use Plan 2020 (LUP) with a view to adopting several minor amendments to the LUP in 2027.

In accordance with the provisions outlined in the *Transport Infrastructure Act 1994*, a Statement of Proposals (SOP) summarising the nature of the LUP changes relating to Brisbane Core Port Land has been prepared for a 20-business day public review period from 22 June 2026.

Stakeholders are invited to review the SOP during this period:

- on PBPL's website at: <https://www.portbris.com.au/Property/Land-Use-Planning/>
- in hardcopy at the Port of Brisbane Visitors Centre (3 Port Central Avenue, Fisherman Islands) or
- by emailing [lup@portbris.com.au](mailto:lup@portbris.com.au) to request a copy

#### "Talk to a Planner" sessions

PBPL employees will also be available to discuss the proposed amendments at the Port of Brisbane Visitors' Centre on 8 July and 15 July 2026 from 9am – 11am.

Alternatively, one-on-one meetings can be arranged by appointment by contacting (07) 3258 4888 during business hours.

Throughout the SOP period, stakeholders are encouraged to review the SOP document and are invited to make a submission.

For a submission to be accepted by PBPL it must:

- be in writing
- be signed by each person making the submission/s (or enter full name to approve submission in electronic submission)
- detail any comments or feedback regarding the SOP
- be received by close of business on 17 July 2026

Submissions can be lodged via:

**Post:** Land Use Plan 2027 Project Team, Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd, Locked Bag 1818, Port of Brisbane QLD 4178

**Delivery:** Land Use Plan 2027 Project Team, Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd, 3 Port Central Avenue, Port of Brisbane QLD 4178

**Electronic submission:** online form available at: <https://www.portbris.com.au/Property/Land-Use-Planning/>

**Email:** [lup@portbris.com.au](mailto:lup@portbris.com.au)

Following the review of the SOP, PBPL will draft a revised LUP that will also undergo a 40-business day public review period. This review will take place prior to PBPL seeking final government approvals of the amended LUP.

For further information, please contact the Land Use Plan 2027 Project Team on (07) 3258 4888 or email [lup@portbris.com.au](mailto:lup@portbris.com.au).

# CAR REVIEW

## MG U9 PERFORMANCE X

BY JOHN VANDERMAAT



At first glance, the MG U9 Utility makes a strong impression. Its large, boxy design gives it real presence, while practical touches such as side steps and well-positioned grab handles make entry easy.

Inside, keyless entry reveals a spacious, well-appointed cabin focused on comfort and usability. Features include electrically adjustable and heated front seats, a heated tilt-and-telescopic steering wheel, and paddle shifters for a more engaging drive. The elevated driving position offers excellent visibility, although the prominent bonnet can feel imposing at first. This quickly becomes second nature, and the vehicle soon feels intuitive to drive.

On the road, the MG U9 delivers a smooth and refined ride – more so than you might expect from a 4WD utility. It performs particularly well on the highway, with composed handling, a responsive eight-speed automatic transmission, and strong acceleration, especially in Sport mode. A comprehensive suite of sensors and cameras underpins its driver-assistance systems. While some time may be needed to tailor alerts and displays, these features enhance both safety and driver confidence. The 12.3-inch infotainment touchscreen is clear, responsive, and easy to navigate.

Off-road capability is another highlight. Tested on farm tracks and steep inclines, the U9 handled uneven terrain, loose surfaces, and climbs with ease. Its 19-inch alloy wheels and well-tuned suspension system deliver both traction and comfort, maintaining stability even in more demanding conditions.

The Explore X model I drove included most of the features I was looking for. Stepping up to the Explore Pro adds further practicality, including a tri-fold tailgate with an integrated step and an optional smart hatch connecting the cabin to the rear tub.



Photo: Supplied.

Having driven many four-wheel-drive utilities, the MG U9 strikes an appealing balance between capability and comfort. It delivers the off-road performance enthusiasts expect, while maintaining the refinement needed for everyday use.

Thanks go to Bartons for supplying the MG U9 Utility for review.

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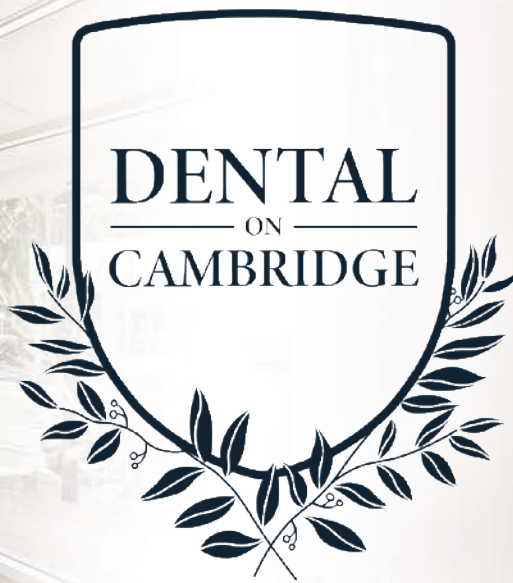
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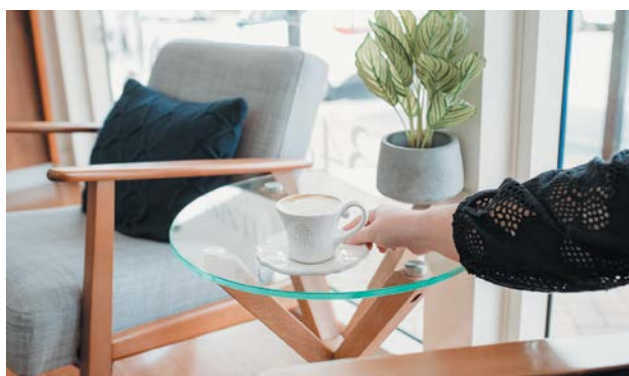
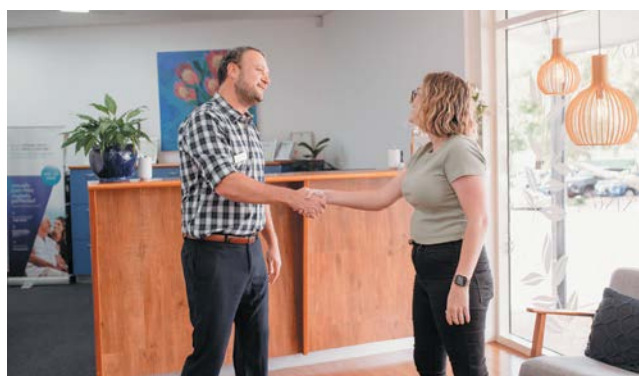
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