

# WOLLONDILLY EXPRESS

Issue 45 - 22 September 2023

Weekly news across the Wollondilly Shire

\$2.00



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Following reports of his arrest in July by the Express, Silverdale resident and accountant Benjamin Carter has had the federal regulator throw the book at him this week ahead of his multi-million-dollar fraud-related criminal prosecution.

## PICTON BYPASS: An inch, not a mile

In six months since being elected, independent Wollondilly MP, Judy Hannan has secured nearly triple the funding spent in the previous year towards the Picton Bypass in the State Budget this week, however, the project still has a long way to go.

**FULL REPORT ON PAGE 8**



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## Regulator bans Silverdale accountant facing fraud charges

Following reports of his arrest in July by the Express, Silverdale resident and accountant Benjamin Carter has had the federal regulator throw the book at him this week ahead of his multi-million-dollar fraud-related criminal prosecution.

CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER

On Thursday, two months after his arrest, Benjamin Carter of Silverdale had the federal regulator of tax agents, the Tax Practitioners Board (TPB), throw the book at him ahead of a criminal prosecution for allegedly defrauding his clients of \$26 million to finance his lavish lifestyle and gambling.

On 11 July, Silverdale residents were shocked to learn of a police raid at the home of the accountant in the northern Wollondilly village. The 36-year-old Mr Carter, of Carters Tax Advisory in Penrith, was arrested at his home and faces 16 criminal charges.

These include 14 counts of dishonestly obtaining a financial advantage by deception, one count of knowingly deal with the proceeds of crime with intent to conceal, and one count of possession of a prohibited drug.

On the same day, Mr Carter's 25-year-old girlfriend and receptionist, Amy Steele, was arrested at his Penrith office and charged with recklessly dealing with the proceeds of crime. She was granted conditional bail.

In addition to owning his firm, Mr Carter was the chief financial officer of a celebrity beer start-up, Drink West, owned by Penrith Panthers star Nathan Cleary and UFC fighters Tai "Bam Bam" Tuivasa and Tyson Pedro.

Police allege that Mr Carter stole \$26 million from at least eight clients, and court documents reveal that he allegedly stole \$440,000 from a prospective investor of Drink West.

Police also claim that Mr Carter has links to organised crime networks, including top

members of the western Sydney Alameddine gang.

The day after his arrest, on 12 July, Mr Carter was denied bail at Penrith Local Court. His lawyer, Nick Hanna, told the court that his client had gambled away nearly all of the money. He explained that Mr Carter was currently taking legal action against online betting platform Sportsbet to recoup some of the money.

A month later, on 16 August, Mr Carter appeared before the Supreme Court via audio-visual link from Long Bay Correctional Centre in a fresh bid for bail. Despite strong opposition from the Crown prosecutor, Mr Carter was granted strict bail conditions, including a \$700,000 surety, an electronic monitoring bracelet and daily reporting to the police.

At the bail hearing, it was revealed that the prosecution brief of evidence contained 20,000 pages.

The criminal charges against Mr Carter followed an earlier investigation against his firm by the regulator, the TPB, which identified a range of serious criminal offences which it referred to the police for investigation.

This Thursday, the TPB terminated Mr Carter's registration and slapped him with the maximum five-year ban, preventing reapplication to the TPB for registration. Its investigation revealed five separate breaches of the Code of Professional Conduct by engaging in serious and fraudulent misconduct.

Mr Carter's breaches of the code included knowingly lodging false business activity statements and amendments on behalf of a client without their knowledge. Additionally,



Benjamin Carter was given the maximum penalty by the federal regulator

he misled other clients into believing he had lodged their tax returns, advised them that they owed tax debts, then used that money for his personal benefit.

The TPB investigation later found that Mr Carter disregarded the tax system and did not meet his own tax obligations, including those of his company, totalling over \$1 million in tax debts.

Chair of the TPB, Peter de Cure, told the Express, "Mr Carter's conduct was serious, fraudulent and demonstrated dishonesty and deception."

"His actions undermined the integrity of the tax profession and caused detriment to his clients and the ATO. We were not willing to let Mr Carter continue practising, as it posed an unacceptable risk to the public."

Mr Carter remains on bail and is due to return to Penrith Local Court on 3 November.

By Cristian King

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## WOLLONDILLY EXPRESS

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### From the EDITOR

The heatwave this week, the declaration of El Niño and the early breakout of fires are a sobering wake-up call to the summer to come. I hope everybody had a chance to reflect and act on the RFS Get Ready Weekend.

The latest crime statistics for Wollondilly show that assaults – including domestic violence – outnumbered other offences over the past 12 months, followed by malicious damage to property. Emily reports on page 5.

Congratulations to the Thirlmere Roosters First-grade rugby league team who narrowly won their Group 6 grand final, inflicting the first defeat of the season on Camden Rams. Sky reports on page 20.

Judy Hannan PM welcomes expenditures that highlight the needs of families, women, commuters and the vul-



nerable in the local community. Emily has the details on page 7.

Volunteers may return to Wollondilly animal shelter soon after they were disbanded during COVID. Sky reports on the council's renewed focus on rehoming animals. See page 11.

When this issue of the Express went to print there were just 100 days till Christmas! The year is flying by. Congratulations to the year 12s finishing their formal education and all the best of luck for your HSC exams.

Enjoy your week  
Cristian King  
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## Palliative care unit's fate in doubt

A local Facebook group, Save Palliative Care at Camden Hospital, is fighting to keep the important service in the area.

The future of the palliative care unit is unknown. There have been discussions and speculation that it will be closed by early next year and its service moved to Campbelltown Hospital.

The Express asked NSW Health and South Western Sydney Local Health District for clarification; however, no response was received before publication.

Since the Facebook group started a month ago, 2,300 members have joined, and numerous comments have stated the importance of the unit at Camden.

One member said, "My brother was in Camden palliative care in 2003, where he was treated with dignity and such care, now to close that facility down is a crying shame."

Another wrote, "Camden Palliative Care is a sacred site in our community. I never drive past there without remembering the precious last week's spent with my father ..."

One of the Facebook Group admins, Janice Moloney, told

the Express that her dad was in Camden's care up until late 2022 and "it's a nice way to end a life in one of those beautiful rooms that faces the garden, instead of looking out at a concrete jungle at hospital".

Camden Rotary, along with other donors and volunteers, established the gardens and amenities at the unit.

Ms Moloney is happy with the community response so far but hopes to raise more awareness – as it is important that more people know about the situation – and to gain further support.

So far, the organisers of the Facebook group have written to politicians and started a petition to keep the 10-bed palliative care unit open.

According to the petition, the concerns of closure include: putting extra pressure on Campbelltown Hospital staff and parking; the cause of unnecessary stress on local families, "which could cost them saying goodbye to their loved ones"; the doubling of travel time for locals to see family; added costs for parking; and taking away "important services" from an area with a growing population.

The signature goal is 5,000 and there were 4,415 before

the Express went to press. The Member for Wollondilly, Judy Hannan, opposes any drop of services in the region. "If anything, we need more."



The Member for Wollondilly, Judy Hannan

She said the palliative care unit at Camden was vital that she would continue to lobby for increased health services in Wollondilly.

The Facebook group is calling on the community's help: "[Once it is moved to Campbelltown] it will just be a ward; no garden ... homely feel or beautiful view for a peaceful end of life where families can feel at home while their loved one takes this journey. Please help us save our beautiful palliative care unit."

To sign the petition, go to <https://tinyurl.com/45skwuh9>  
By Emily Perkins

## Assaults top local crime statistics



New crime data was released this week by the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR).

In Wollondilly in the past 12 months the top five reported offences were malicious damage to property (199), domestic-violence-related assault (149), non-domestic-violence-related assault (95), other stealing offences (94) and steal from a motor vehicle (80).

In Sydney's south-west over the past two years there have been significant increases in major crimes, the worst being motor vehicle theft, which jumped by 47.3 per cent.

The other increases were in non-domestic-violence-re-

lated assault (up 34 per cent), break and enter non-dwelling (24.1 per cent), steal from motor vehicle (22.1 per cent), steal from retail store (46.3 per cent) and other stealing offences (15.6 per cent).

Statewide in the first half of 2023, the statistics show that retail theft returned to, but did not exceed, pre-pandemic levels.

BOCSAR's executive director, Jackie Fitzgerald, said: "There have been concerns that high inflation and rising cost of living have triggered a surge in shoplifting, but the view of retail theft presented by police data does not support this.

"If emerging external factors

like cost of living were driving an increase in retail theft, we would expect theft volumes to be noticeably higher than pre-pandemic levels."

The item most frequently reported stolen in retail theft incidents continued to be liquor – particularly bourbon, whisky and vodka – followed by clothing.

While young people aged 14 to 17 had the highest rate of prosecutions for retail theft by population, they accounted for only 15 per cent of all legal actions.

In 2022-23, men accounted for 59 per cent of legal actions for retail theft.

By Emily Perkins

**LAWMATTERS**

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Lawyer

### WILLS WORK BEST WHEN ASSETS ARE HELD CORRECTLY

You can do whatever you want in your Will, but it is important to understand that your Will will not work smoothly if your assets are not held correctly. RMB Wills and Estates Lawyer MATTHEW McCULLOCH explains:

When preparing a Will it is extremely important that you review how your assets are held, to ensure that they pass as intended. You should do the same thing as you acquire new assets over time.

A Will deals with assets that form part of your estate upon your death. In simple terms, this means assets owned in your own personal name. You cannot deal with any jointly owned assets in your Will. If you die before the other owner of the account or asset, regardless of what your Will says, those assets will pass to the survivor under the law of survivorship.

The same thing applies to any property owned as joint tenants. If you own property with another individual and wish to deal with your interest of the property in any way other than leaving it to the other owner, you will need to make sure that you own the property as tenants in common. The process of converting title from joint tenants to tenants in common is fairly straightforward and can be carried out by your lawyer.

Superannuation is often a major asset that people want to factor into their estate planning. However it is subject to its own rules, and therefore you must get it right when preparing your Will.

People may be surprised to learn that in most cases superannuation will not be dealt with under the terms of your Will. In fact, without making a binding death benefit nomination, your super will likely be paid to your spouse or partner, your children, another dependent, or some combination of these.

You can put all the clauses in the world into your Will about who will receive your super, but they will not have any impact unless the trustee of your superannuation fund makes payment to your estate. The only way to ensure this happens is to make a valid binding nomination in favour of your legal personal representative. You should review this regularly to ensure it remains valid if your Will is contingent on super benefits being paid to your estate.

These are just a few of the scenarios where assets can present unintended issues that may defeat the terms of your Will.

Paul Bartholomew  
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## Wollondilly 5-day weather forecast

### Saturday



A cloudy day today with light south-easterly winds.

Temperatures ranging between 16-21C.

### Sunday



A partly cloudy day is expected with light north-easterly winds.

Daytime temperatures will sit between 18-23C.

### Monday



A sunny day is predicted with light north-easterly winds.

Temperatures will span 23-28C.

### Tuesday



A partly cloudy day is on the cards with light north-easterly winds.

Temperatures will remain consistent at 23-28C.

### Wednesday



A partly cloudy day is forecast with a slight chance of a shower and light northerly winds shifting south-westerly later in the day.

Hot temperatures will reach to 27-32C.

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# Vale Bryce Fairley



Bryce and Vicki Fairley were married for 52 years



Vicki and Bryce Fairley with one of their seven grandchildren



Leah Hodson (daughter of Bryce and Vicki Fairley) and her husband John Hodson with Bryce and grandchildren



L-R: Vicki and Bryce Fairley, Joan Walker (Bryce's mother-in-law) and Tracy Hoggarth-Green

Bryce Fairley has been remembered for his life-long duty to his community and family, as his battle with lung cancer has come to an end on Tuesday.

Born on 4 June 1950, Bryce was originally from Wollongong but was a resident of Bargo for 15 years.

He was married to Vicki for 52 years, and they had two children, Leah and John. There are seven grandchildren.

Ms Fairley said that Bryce's "whole life" was an achieve-

ment. "When we were in Bargo, it was the fire brigade, SES and helping anybody in need."

When they eventually moved to Queensland, she said, he contacted the fire brigade on the first weekend and joined the SES.

Bryce worked as a computer operator and metallurgist and opened his own business with Vicki - WeCare Country Kennels - a boarding kennel and a rescue shelter for dogs.

Ms Fairley said dogs were his passion: "There's going to be a

lot of dogs waiting for him at the Pearly Gates."

She said that, right up until the end, Bryce was always worried about how the animals were, and wanted updates.

Bryce's sister-in-law, Tracy Hoggarth-Green, said that being a fire brigade member was a "lifelong interest" for him and he was "so proud" of becoming a life member of the Bargo brigade.

He had extensive experience in several brigades and

Ms Hoggarth-Green described him as "totally dedicated in everything he did", especially as he remained heavily involved with Bargo's brigade after moving interstate.

"He had a life full of duty for the community and family, whom he always put as top priority," she said.

Bryce sacrificed a lot for the service of the community and during his time in the local brigade he held a range of positions: equipment officer, secretary, deputy captain,

captain and senior deputy.

A Bargo brigade spokesperson said, "He did much for the brigade in his time here", including being behind the push to get their first brand-new heavy tanker Cat 1.

"He was never prouder than when he became a life member, and his last stated wish was to take his final journey with his 'Life Member' patch on."

There will be a private family gathering to farewell Bryce.

*By Emily Perkins*

# Spending on the vulnerable welcomed by Hannan



Expenditures include energy bill relief, renting and housing allocations and toll relief



Member for Wollondilly Judy Hannan

The state budget was announced this week and the Member for Wollondilly, Judy Hannan, has welcomed expenditures that highlight the needs of families, women, commuters and the vulnerable in the local community.

These include spending on preschools, energy bill relief, renting and housing allocations, toll relief and funding for victims of sexual assault.

"Along with the \$769.3 million for new preschools on public school sites and a further \$60 million for upgrades,

the \$1.6 billion preschool fee relief for both community, mobile preschools and long-day-care preschools will provide opportunities to those in Wollondilly who may not have otherwise been able to attend early childhood education," Ms Hannan said.

"This allocation could see between \$500 and \$4,220 per year per child in fee relief and has the run-on impact of giving more women the opportunity to return to the paid workforce sooner."

She said the new Wilton Junction Primary School would have an adjacent community preschool.

"Recognising the importance for children's physical and mental well-being through physical activity, the means-tested Active and Creative Kids vouchers have been permanently funded, which will help with cost of living for families."

However, Ms Hannan said she would talk to the minister about the removal of the First Lap swimming vouchers.

Ms Hannan said that nearly half of renters in Wollondilly were spending more than 30 per cent of their household income on rent.

Of the \$224 million Essential Housing Package, Ms Hannan said, "With the growth areas of Wilton and Appin in Wollondilly, we are going to see our fair share of these government-funded houses, many for essential workers who live and work in our community," Ms Hannan said.

"I am keen to hear from the Minister for Planning the plans for the infrastructure that will accommodate these new houses, and the environmental priority of conserving koala habitat."

Ms Hannan said that Wollondilly residents should see changes to the cost of living thanks to the recent budget: "Overall the budget recognises the cost-of-living pressures and the needs of our community, but there is much more work to be done."

She also welcomed funding of \$2.806 million for a new primary school at Wilton Junction and \$22.385 million to upgrade Wilton Primary School.



The new Wilton Junction Primary School will be accompanied by an adjacent community preschool

However, she added, "While the need for primary schools has been recognised in the budget, there is still a lack of high schools in my electorate. Wollondilly has only two public high schools to cover an area of over 3,000 square kilometres."

*By Emily Perkins*

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## Trees put villages in the shade



A total of 447 trees have been planted across Wollondilly thanks to a grant of more than \$260,000 through the second round of the Greening Our City program.

Bargo, Picton, Menangle, Cawdor and The Oaks were chosen for the latest round of plantings of native and ornamental trees selected to increase the canopy cover and benefit the community and the environment.

The focus this time was to manage local climate extremes, such as heat-island

effects, by creating a better microclimate to ensure there will always be something flowering, fruiting or seeding throughout the year, and to increase biodiversity.

The project achieved an average increase in canopy cover of around 20 per cent across all sites, which were at WS Williams Park, The Oaks; St James Park, Menangle; Burragorang Road, The Oaks; Finns Road Menangle, Fairleys Sportsground, Picton; Bargo Sportsground; and Harold Noakes Park, The Oaks.

## PICTON BYPASS: An inch, not a mile

CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER

The Minns Labor state government delivered its first budget this week, including a published line item for the Picton Bypass, secured by the Independent Member for Wollondilly, Judy Hannan.

In the lead-up to the budget, Ms Hannan's office issued a media statement on the Picton Bypass receiving funding on 13 September, including the quote from Ms Hannan that, "This brings a project of over 35 years close to fruition.

"Previous governments have made announcements but have never included this as a line item or actually fund the project."

In a subsequent statement after the budget was released, Ms Hannan affirmed that this was the first time the project had been included as a budget line item, receiving \$1.388 million.

However, this is not the first time the Picton Bypass project has received funding from the state government – and it did not receive \$1.388 million.

Located within Treasurer Daniel Mookhey's Budget Paper number three infrastructure statement, on page 59 of chapter four, is the line item for the planning (not construction) of Picton Bypass – an allocation of \$1 million for the 2023–24 financial year. The project forms a part of Transport for NSW's annual funding

report for the Picton Bypass. The report recommended option number nine out of 18 options, being a new two-lane, two-way connection between Remembrance Driveway, at a new intersection about 300 metres south of Wonga Road, and Picton Road, at a new intersection around 400 metres north-west of Maldon Bridge Road.

Since that report, another consultation report was undertaken in August 2021, and the project has been sitting idle ever since.

While the \$1 million budget allocation for this financial year is not the same as a fully funded, ready-to-go infrastructure project, it is a significant step after two years of stagnation.

In her statement after the budget, Ms Hannan explained, "I will be following the planning process closely, and will continue to advocate for the bypass to be completed in a timely manner."

According to Infrastructure NSW's guide on infrastructure projects, the next stage of the project is a final business case and investment decision. Should that be completed, a feasibility study will occur, followed by a planning application (including an environmental impact statement), procurement, then an award of a construction contract.

By Cristian King

## Budget's housing package is just "a first step"



NSW Premier Chris Minns

The state budget handed down this week included a \$224 million Essential Housing Package to address the supply of new social housing and solutions to get people off the waiting list.

The package includes funding to extend access to temporary accommodation for people in crisis, along with funding to specialist homelessness services that provide certainty and stability for the people who need it most.

The Premier, Chris Minns said: "Everyone deserves access to safe and secure shelter. This package will be a boost to social and affordable housing and will help break cycles of homelessness.

"This is an important first

step as we better support people in some of the most vulnerable situations. We have a housing crisis in NSW and we are working across the government to address the challenges."

However, the Member for Wollondilly Judy Hannan, said that while the package had a number of great projects there were insufficient details of its local implications.

"The needs of what we have locally for housing and homelessness affects women and young people," she said. "To this end, I have written to the government since the election to increase services for housing, and have facilitated meetings with council and Argyle Housing to bring more

supply locally that would suit programs for those in need of affordable housing, including essential workers that are eligible."

Ms Hannan said she recently attended a forum with local housing providers and the MPs for Camden and Goulburn, Sally Quinell and Wendy Tuckerman.

"While the numbers and percentages of those most in need for immediate housing in Wollondilly show there is limited need," Ms Hannan said, "the reality is, the safety net is often held by not-for-profit organisations locally and there is an unmeasured amount of surf-couching young people."

By Angela Bell

## Families to benefit from \$500 of preschool fee relief



Families will benefit from \$500 in fee relief under the government's push to boost preschool education and provide cost of living relief.

This is part of a more than \$100 million package of initiatives to invest in early learning and enhance the sector's workforce.

Investment in quality early childhood education and care has lifelong benefits for NSW's youngest learners and is a key to enabling parental workforce participation.

The initiatives include:  
1. Fee relief: \$64 million over two years to provide \$500 in fee relief per child, per year for parents of three-year-olds in

long day care preschool programs.

2. Flexibility for families: \$20 million for the Flexible Initiatives Trial to expand access to early childhood education and care, extended hours and assist parents re-entering the workforce.

3. New services: \$20 million in capital funds to support new not-for-profit services in high-growth and regional communities.

4. Workforce: \$22 million over five years to recruit and retain essential early childhood workers including providing professional development and scholarships for tertiary education of early childhood workers.

## Return to spender:

### Motorists to get cash back under toll cap

Almost three-quarters of a million motorists will qualify for toll relief under the Minns Labor Government's \$60 toll cap, confirmed to begin on January 1.

Trucks will receive a rebate for a third of their trip travelled on the M5 East and M8, costing \$54 million over the two-year trial.

The NSW Government is currently undertaking an independent review of toll roads, led by Professor Allan Fels AO and Dr David Cousins AM who will report back with recommendations to make the system safer, fairer and more efficient.

motorists as was anticipated when announced by Labor prior to the election. At that time, an estimated 51,000 motorists were forecast to benefit under a \$151 million plan.

Toll rebates for heavy vehicles using the M5 East and M8 tunnels will also come into effect on 1 January.

Trucks will receive a rebate for a third of their trip travelled on the M5 East and M8, costing \$54 million over the two-year trial.

The NSW Government is currently undertaking an independent review of toll roads, led by Professor Allan Fels AO and Dr David Cousins AM who will report back with recommendations to make the system safer, fairer and more efficient.

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## Council meeting to focus on animal shelter



Three month old Toby is currently at the shelter and ready for adoption

The Wollondilly Animal Shelter's volunteer program was discarded during the COVID lockdowns, but Councillor Suzy Brandstater told the Express she hoped to bring it back by putting a motion forward at the next council meeting.

She said that while the council must work within the resources it currently has, re-visiting the volunteer program was necessary to raise community awareness of the animals in the shelter.

"This is an area we need to work on," she said. "We are limited by what we've got, but I'm sure we can do something to help."

"Some people don't even know where our pound is in Wollondilly, so there needs to be more awareness and we need to promote more the animals we do have."

The involvement of local vol-



Cllr Suzy Brandstater

unteers at the shelter, she said, would foster a stronger relationship between the council and the community. Attention should be given to the "sadder parts of the shelter" for pets that have been abandoned due to rental pressures or behavioural issues.

Cr Brandstater said volunteer training and inductions would be necessary to ensure that work health and safety standards were maintained.

"People who are volunteering are going to have a much better understanding of the hurdles we face," she said, and suggested that an open day could increase public awareness.

The Mayor of Wollondilly, Matt Gould, told the Express that the shelter's high rate of rehoming was something to be proud of. "We are committed to keeping all the animals who come into the shelter comfortable and healthy while they wait for their forever homes."

He cited the council's recent Dilly Doggy Day Out as a successful initiative where three of the shelter's dogs were adopted.

"To promote the pets available, council's Animals and Pets webpage is updated daily where practicable," he said, "and a Pet of the Week is regularly promoted on council's Facebook page."

"I look forward to discussing this motion at our upcoming council meeting as we strive to provide the best possible service to our community and animals, whilst also managing our limited resources and council's work health and safety requirements."

If volunteers are reinstated, Cr Brandstater suggests, they could take the shelter's dogs for walks and assist with grooming pets and spend quality time with them.

"There needs to be a happy ending for as many animals as we possibly can get ... Every animal we can rehome is a win."

Cr Brandstater said events such as the Dilly Doggy Day Out showed that "people are definitely interested in learning more about the shelter."

For more information about the Wollondilly Animal Shelter visit <https://www.wollondilly.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-pets/animal-shelter/>

By Sky Carrall

## Safety signs to protect koalas



Koala crossing sign Appin Road, Mount Gilead

The NSW Government has taken further action to protect koalas by installing an additional two signs along Appin Road, at a well-known koala crossing between Rosemeadow and Appin.

The signs have been installed in the lead-up to the summer breeding season, when koalas are most active. The new signs join two others that warn motorists to be careful when they drive over the frequently used crossing.

The member for Wollondilly, Judy Hannan, is chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Koalas.

She said, "My constituents actively - and all too regularly - contact me with news of another koala killed by a car on

Appin Road, so this funding must be quickly followed by action.

She said there was work to be done to ensure that koalas were not moved from an "endangered" status to "critically endangered" or even "extinct in the wild".

"Loss of habitat and biodiversity, due to urban sprawl, is a critical challenge faced by koalas," she said.

The Member for Campbelltown, Greg Warren, said, "This is an important local initiative for our community to ensure that we are protecting the Campbelltown koala colony of over 175 koalas."

He said the government wanted to do everything it could to allow koalas to boost their population.



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## Whodunnit play serves more than drama

Staging a mystery ... actors Lisa Emmert, Russell Kay (in jacket), Stephen Wheatley (raincoat) and Paul Channell (waistcoat).

The Picton Theatre Group is putting on the psychological mystery play "Cat's Cradle" next month at the Wollondilly Shire Hall in Picton.

The play, directed by the group's president, Peter Donnelly, follows a detective trying to solve a cold case from his past about a missing child.

There are eight actors in the production. Stage managers, the director and producers, and lighting and sound technicians all volunteer their time to give local actors a place to perform.

Paul Channell, a committee member and treasurer of the Picton Theatre Group, has been with the group more than 20 years. He said the

process of developing the play had taken around six months - auditions, rehearsals and organising the set and costumes.

"We really just want to deliver a great show and encourage others to keep getting involved," he said.

"If you like English detective TV shows like "Inspector Frost", or Agatha Christie mysteries, then you will love "Cat's Cradle."

The Picton Theatre Group has been performing continuously in Wollondilly Shire for more than 50 years, with an average of two productions a year.

"We are a small but vibrant community-based theatre group who is always on the

lookout for volunteers, whether that is on-stage, backstage or helping out in whatever capacity," Mr Channell said.

Their repertoire offered a different experience from those of other local groups by providing a dinner-show concept where patrons can watch the show and have a meal in the same venue.

"Cat's Cradle" premieres on Saturday, 7 October, with a buffet dinner and show commencing at 5.30pm.

Other shows are on Saturdays 14 and 21 October, with evening shows and also matinees at 1.30pm.

For tickets, visit <https://www.facebook.com/PictonTheatreGroup>

By Sky Carrall



Senior Friendship Group members - I.C. Care Picton.

## Activities for everyone

Numerous social activities are available in Wollondilly Shire for people of all interests, whether for recreation or volunteering. Here are some of them.

Tahmoor Scrabble Club welcomes players of all abilities. The group meets at the Wollondilly Health Centre each Monday from 1pm to 3.30pm. For more information contact Bev 0409 913 679.

Join Cawdor's 50-plus group has a morning tea, lunch and guest speaker at the Uniting Church in Cawdor every fourth Thursday of the month at 9.30am. Anyone aged 50 or over is welcome. For more information, contact Jean 4654 5527 or Betty 0410 167 207.

Tahmoor Fibre Group meets for spinning, felting and weaving activities at the Uniting Church in Thirlmere Way at Tahmoor every second Tuesday from 11am to 3pm. Begin-

ners are welcome. For more information, contact Terri 0429 468 420.

The Senior Friendship Group at Wollondilly Community Support and Care is available for people aged 65 and above who live with a disability. Attendees can meet new people and join activities. Accessible outings take place five times a month. For more information, contact 4677 2524.

The Australian Red Cross is recruiting volunteers in Thirlmere for the community visitors scheme, which helps isolated people in aged-care homes enjoy a better quality of life. Volunteers are matched with a resident who shares similar interests for a one-hour visit each week or fortnight. Volunteers must be aged 18 and over and have suitable listening and communication skills. For more information email [dbarrientos@redcross.org.au](mailto:dbarrientos@redcross.org.au) or [sharon.colins@rslifecare.org.au](mailto:sharon.colins@rslifecare.org.au) or call 4861 5727.

School holiday programs are being held at Warragamba Silverdale Neighbourhood Centre and parents are urged to register their children, otherwise the programs may be cancelled. Contact 4774 1273 or email [community@wvsn.org.au](mailto:community@wvsn.org.au) with the subject "School holiday fun".



Creative holiday activity, Warragamba Silverdale Neighbourhood Centre July 2023

## Sign up for garage sale trail



Registrations are now open for the 2023 Garage Sale Trail

Registrations are now being taken for a nationwide Garage Sale Trail of pre-loved items.

This year's sale trail will take place in November across two weekends on 11 and 18 November.

Last year, there were over 15,000 garage sales held across Australia with more than 300,000 people buying or selling.

The aim of the trail is to extend the lives of clothes, furniture, paraphernalia and more, and ultimately saving objects from going straight to landfill.

People wanting to get involved can do so by selling their pre-loved items, attending local garage sales or joining the event's online workshops to learn more about sustainability.

The project began in Bondi in 2010 and has since gained the support of close to 100 local councils across Australia and



been adopted by the UK Government.

Online Trail Tutorial workshops will be held on Saturday and Sunday 28-29 October. The tutorials will cover sustainable hacks to flip pre-loved items into fashionable outfits and decor.

Presenters of the workshops include an internet personality, Chrissy Flanagan, the ABC's Veronica Milsom and 2 Aussie Thrifters.

To register, visit <https://www.garagesaletrail.com.au/register>  
By Sky Carrall

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Mum's the Word By Peach Robb

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# The milestone paranoia

I have a new baby nephew and my brother and sister-in-law have their hands full balancing the sleeping patterns of a two-month-old with a two-year-old. In their sleep-deprived state, they are navigating this fourth trimester pretty fantastically. When the little ones are that tiny, there is a seemingly never-ending list of leaps and developmental milestones we are supposed to stay on top of - though not too on top of because then we run the risk of unfairly comparing our children to each other and others - not helpful. But when they're tiny, there are so many, it does become a bit of a blur and you just sort of float through, whipping yourself into a guilt-laden frenzy every few weeks for whatever thing you did wrong.

I have one friend who is currently battling the feeding guilt train. The mother suffers terrible eczema and relies on heavy steroids to keep it in check - something she has had to forgo during the pregnancy and breastfeeding (because there is just not enough evidence either way about whether the drugs harm the baby). Subsequently, she has been significantly uncomfortable for close to a year while she protects her bub. She is now in a guilt spiral because she is considering finishing breastfeeding so that she can get herself healthy again. She keeps giving herself milestones as cut-offs and

then reading something telling her she must keep feeding. As a consequence, her milestone watching has become even more intense.

Milestone watching is a dangerous game regardless of their age. The only advantage is that they become ever-so-slightly fewer and further between as the little people get bigger.

Having said that - all through primary school it seems we parents are in a constant battle with ourselves not to compare our children - unless of course, their physical or mental health depends on it.

Bike riding is a good example, some little ones get on their balance bike as a toddler and it just makes sense. They get the hang of the momentum needed for balance and when they make the transition to training-wheel-free riding, it is smooth and often quick. For others, balance doesn't think click in the same way and trying to explain how going faster, helps you balance can be terrifying for parent and child alike.

Kids start riding at such a wide range of ages. Hearing that the next-door neighbour's child started riding before their fourth birthday can send us into a spin - is our perfectly typical child facing a developmental challenge? Are we doing the wrong thing? Do we need to get them at the top of a grassy knoll and just push (like so many of us experienced)? Did we do the wrong thing

letting them have training wheels? Or taking off the pedals? Or holding them as they get balanced, or any number of ways that people learn. We sometimes forget that our little people take their own time, and often, their own time is the right amount of time.

Mr 9, wasn't interested until he was about six. Subsequently we took him to get fitted for the right size bike, and hilariously, after not being interested or able before, it took him the distance from the bike shop to our home for him to get the hang of it (you see we didn't realise the bike wouldn't fit in the back of our car so Mr 6-at-the-time and I had to walk/ride the bike home the 45-minute walk).

Like with it all we need to listen to our children and be led in part by their motivation.

It's the same with school development. The range in those early years of school is enormous and it's hard not to compare.

Keeping an eye out for red flags is always going to be something we do. But, we do need to leave our guilt at the door and trust the process - everyone learns at their own pace and as the "typical" range widens, we have to find a way to balance the tightrope of conscientious parenting and guilt-spiralling.

### My Week ... Biggest Mama Battles ...

- School shoes becoming ever-so-slightly snug as we reach



the end of term three - surely we can make it to the end of the year rather than getting the new ones for the start of next term, only to see the darling ones experience a growth spurt over the summer

- Grappling with end-of-term fatigue to crawl our way to the holidays
- Realising the school holidays are nearly upon us with little planned to keep Messrs 5 and 9 occupied

### Mumming wins ...

- The other night, Mr 9 finished his dinner, having already done music and homework, popped his plate in the kitchen and proceeded to take himself to the shower and get himself ready for bed completely unprompted
- Got out the door two minutes earlier than usual on Monday morning (the misguided optimist in me decided this was something that would undoubtedly continue until the

end of the term)

- Watching the boys meet their new baby cousin and see the joy in both their faces as they were given their little cuddles (extra points for Mr 5 whispering a story about a little tiny baby who was "so lazy that he slept all day" into the baby's ear as he cuddled him)

### Try this at home ...

With the weather heating up, I'm all about the outside play - we had one hilariously muddy afternoon over the weekend when Mr 5 decided it was prime "MUD SHOWER" (that is the sound of a five-year-old yelling) season, which required several bowls/pots to be filled with mud before being applied to the arms, legs and face - fear not fair readers, there was a regular shower after. If you're not so into the mud, try some sprinkler play (preferably with swimmers rather than school uniforms).

# Half-ironman undaunted by pain



L-R: Tayla Lumley (Layne's girlfriend), Jessica Storrier (sister), Allana Storrier (mother), Layne Storrier, Lizzie Storrier (sister), Nick Storrier (father) and Cam Sgouros (best friend)

Menangle-born and raised Layne Storrier, is over halfway through 36 half-ironmans over 36 consecutive days. He started on 1 September to raise money and awareness for cystic fibrosis (CF) Australia.

CF is a genetic disorder of the lungs and digestive system which significantly reduces life expectancy.

Layne's challenge is called Breaking Barriers for Cystic Fibrosis and is taking place in Brisbane.

The Express reported on his story before he began.

"I am feeling great," Layne told the Express, "my body has shocked me with what it can do when given the right recovery and rest."

He said that after a low spot of motivation last week, he was "definitely" more motivated now: "The motivation is on a high, as I want to finish anything I put out there to the public."



Layne swims about 45 minutes a day and cycles for up to 3½ hours.

Layne's mother, Allana Storrier, said: "Mentally, he is remaining upbeat and tackling every day as it comes. Physically, he is tired and sore but focusing on his recovery every afternoon so that he can get through the next day."

She said that so far Layne's setbacks had been Achilles tendon and foot pain from day one, as well as the heat and rain.

Ms Storrier said that community support had been "absolutely amazing", includ-

Layne is and, because Layne is doing this, they felt motivated and have now decided to get back into exercise too."

Layne's daily routine starts at 4.45am and includes a swim of about 45 minutes, a dedication video to someone with CF, up to 3½ hours of cycling, and a run of about 2½ hours. Then he finishes the day with an ice bath, massages and

compression boot before bed by 8pm.

During the challenge Layne will do 68.4 kilometres of swimming, 3,240km of cycling and 759.6km of running.

For more information and to donate to his cause, go to <https://www.cysticfibrosis.org.au/breaking-barriers-for-cf/#>

By Emily Perkins

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By Ewan Kennedy

Ewan Kennedy was a technical research librarian with the NRMA from 1970 until 1985. He was a freelance motoring journalist from 1977 until 1985, before taking a full-time position as technical editor with "Modern Motor". In 1987 he went. He is editor of "Australia's Best Used Cars" magazine and an associate member of the Society of Automotive Engineers - International. He set a Guinness World Record for the greatest distance travelled in a standard road vehicle on a single fuel fill.



2009 Mitsubishi Pajero

## MITSUBISHI PAJERO 2008 - 2021

Mitsubishi Pajero is a genuine SUV, it began its life downunder as a body-on-chassis 4WD and became a monocoque for improved ride and comfort in 2000. Good engineering meant the post-2000 models retained similar strength to the chassis models. All have a low-range case for tough, slow conditions.

We are considering the Pajeros from a major refresh in late 2007 which are classed as being MY2008.

Note that the current Pajero Sport isn't a variant of the standard Pajero that was discontinued in early 2021 but a vehicle in its own right. We'll look at the Sport in a future Used Car Check-out.

Mitsubishi's sophisticated Super Select drivetrain permits the use of all-wheel-drive under any circumstance. For example, safe traction on wet sealed roads if you opt for AWD, or lower fuel consumption on dry dirt roads if you go for 2WD. AWD can be engaged or disengaged on the fly at any speed up to 100 km/h.

Midway through 2013 Pajero was brought up to date in its infotainment and safety equipment.

Mitsubishi Pajero comes with either two or four passenger doors. The two-door wasn't popular and discontinued in 2010.

All short-wheelbase Pajeros have five seats, the long-wheelbase models have either five or seven.



2019 Mitsubishi Pajero

# TOYOTA CRUISER: NO SINKING FEELING... YET



The latest Toyota LandCruiser 300 keeps on keeping on.

By Derek Ogden.

With an honours degree in applied science, Derek Ogden worked for the BBC in local radio and in British newspapers as a production journalist and writer. He moved to Australia in 1975 and worked as a sub-editor with The Courier-Mail and Sunday Mail in Brisbane, moving to the Gold Coast Bulletin in 1980. He was that paper's motoring editor for more than 20 years, expanding the weekly section from a few pages the back of the book to a full-colour liftout of up to 36 pages. He left in 2009.

### INTERIOR

The latest LandCruiser 300 came to market two years ago, with Toyota at pains to supply the vehicle with a stack of the latest automotive technology without lessening the iconic legacy the '300' had attained.

This involved the inclusion of a new 3.3-litre V6 twin turbo diesel engine and advanced driver assistance technology underpinned by the maker's new global architecture platform to provide quality on-road performance, plus off-road capability.

On the other hand, design engineers touched the exterior lightly, bearing in mind potential buyers' loyalty to the traditional character of the large LandCruiser. Joining the show were two new flagship variants, the luxury Sahara ZX and the highly specced off-road GR Sport, joining the existing GX, GXL, VX and Sahara.

Big ticket items all round, the entry-level GX sells for \$89,990, plus on road costs, then follows five models ending up with the flagship Sahara ZX at \$138,790. Under test, taking in a week of town-and-country driving, carting varying loads, was the mid-range Sahara at \$131,190.

Covered by the maker's five-year, unlimited kilometre warranty, and now Toyota Service Advantage has been extended from three years / 60,000 kilometres to five years / 100,000 kilometres, providing customers with capped-price servicing for their first ten services at a cost of \$375 each. Intervals are every six months or 10,000km, whichever comes first.

### STYLING

Homage is paid to heritage with a wide, horizontal grille, flanked by slimline headlights, set higher to avoid damage in the rough.

The rear bumper curves steeply upwards for an increased departure angle, while the rear horizontal lights integrate into the new aluminium rear hatch in a tapered rear, aiding aerodynamics.

The GXL features an 18-inch alloy six-spoke wheel with the Sahara adding a polished 'super chrome metallic' finish.

The cabin wraps occupants in premium comfort, while having easy access to the latest multimedia technology.

Driver and front row are cosseted in seats, with bigger side bolsters, wide enough to accommodate the broad backs often part of the make-up of the typical LandCruiser owner.

The second row seats come in a 40:20:40 set-up and feature a reclining function as well as 92 mm of extra legroom. They can be folded and tumbled forward to create a flat cargo space in the rear and give access to two dicker seats at the back.

Seven-seat operation provides 1004 litres of cargo capacity and seating for five, with up to 1967 litres with both rear rows folded.

### INFOTAINMENT

Info and entertainment come big in the LandCruiser 300 Sahara with the latest generation multimedia system, including a 12.3-inch electronic multi-touchscreen - the largest on any Toyota vehicle - plus standard fitment of the rear seat entertainment system, consisting of a pair of 11.6-inch high-definition touchscreen displays, which are also capable of smartphone mirroring.

The multimedia system is compatible with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, and features Bluetooth connectivity, AM / FM / DAB+ radio and voice recognition. The system adds satellite navigation and a CD / DVD player and Qi wireless phone charging.

**ENGINES / TRANSMISSIONS**

At the heart of the latest LandCruiser 300 is a newly developed 3.3-litre V6 twin-turbo diesel engine, delivering better performance with improved fuel economy and emissions. Tuned to produce 227 kW at 4000 rpm and 700 Nm over a wide 1600 to 2600 rpm band, this adds up to an improvement of 13.5 per cent and 7.7 per cent, respectively, over the previous V8.

Teamed with this motor, the new 10-speed automatic shifts twice as fast as the previous six-speed auto, and the additional ratios make a significant

contribution to improved fuel economy. Three drive modes are offered as standard - Eco, Normal and Sport - that adjust the throttle, transmission and steering parameters to suit the driving experience and conditions.

### SAFETY

The LandCruiser 300 Series sees a vast expansion of the Toyota Safety Sense suite of driver assistance, combining radar and camera sensor technology. For example, the long list of features starts with the pre-collision safety system, which now detects vehicles ahead and pedestrians day and night, as well as oncoming vehicles and cyclists during the day.

PCS now also includes intersection turn assist, and emergency steering assist on VX and above, for the first time on LandCruiser.

Other active safety features include lane trace assist and parking support brake, lane departure alert, rear cross-traffic alert, blind spot monitor, and automatic high beam.

### DRIVING

The big wagon buzzed off from rest on cue, courtesy of firm press of the accelerator pedal, mostly. There were times when turbo contact was a little tardy. However, once up to speed things went along smoothly, the ten-speed automatic transmission and all-wheel drive transposing power to the road according to the driver's instructions.

Toyota tells us the latest LandCruiser 300 consumes 8.9 litres of diesel per 100 kilometres on the combined urban / highway cycle. Closest the test car achieved was 9.5 litres per 100 kilometres over a week of driving in varied conditions on bitumen.

As for ride, the Cruiser tended to rock 'n' roll over uneven surfaces at speed, while handling was surprising agile for a vehicle of its bulk.

### SUMMARY

The legend that is the LandCruiser 300 shows no sign of coming to an end any time soon.

### RATINGS

Looks: 6/10  
Performance: 7/10  
Safety: 8/10  
Thirst: 5/10  
Practicality: 7/10  
Comfort: 8/10  
Tech: 7/10  
Value: 7/10

### MODEL LINE-UP

LandCruiser 300 GX \$89,990  
LandCruiser 300 GXL \$101,790  
LandCruiser 300 VX \$113,990  
LandCruiser 300 Sahara \$131,190  
LandCruiser 300 GR Sport \$137,790  
LandCruiser 300 Sahara ZX \$138,790  
Premium paints \$675  
Prices exclude government and dealer delivery charges.

# Cars, coffee and a skin check



Cars and Coffee is a free event held in Berrima each month, attracting motor enthusiasts from far and wide.

At Sunday's meet-up, a free skin check will be available for anyone who wants it. The Australian Skin Cancer Foundation's Skin Cancer Truck will be stationed at Market Place in Berrima from 7am to 10am.

Cars and Coffee Southern Highlands organiser, Nathan Buckley, said that having the truck at the meet-up aimed to capture as many people as possible to aid in early detection of

skin cancers. No bookings are required for the free service.

"With myself being a survivor of melanoma due to early detection, I cannot encourage this initiative enough," Mr Buckley said.

The skin cancer truck is the first of its kind in Australia and was founded by melanoma survivor Jay Allen, a former truck driver. It is travelling around Australia and is supported by MoleMap, an Australian skin cancer detection and skin mapping service.

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare,

and estimated 1,300 Australians will die of melanoma this year and at least two in three Australians will be diagnosed with some form of skin cancer before the age of 70.

Cars and Coffee at Berrima attracts over 200 owners with vintage and the latest and greatest marques, it is well worth a drive down the Hume for a cuppa and a yarn.

For more information about the skin check service this week visit <https://www.australianskincancerfoundation.org/skin-check-truck>

By Sky Carrall

Photos by Shot By Jay Dubbs



# MONSTER BENZ MAKES ITS OWN ROAD



By Chris Riley

Chris Riley has been a journalist for 40 years. He has spent half his career as a writer, editor and production editor in newspapers, the rest of the time driving and writing about cars. His love affair with cars began as a teenager with the purchase of an old VW Beetle, followed by another Beetle and a string of other cars on which he has wasted too much time and money. A self-confessed geek, he's not afraid to ask the hard questions, even at the risk of sounding silly.

Benz has a lot of irons in many other fires, including military-style off road trucks.

When a UK company wanted something it could use for laying emergency roll out road base, it turned to Benz which



then rotated 90 degrees for deployment and recovery.

A popular choice with defence industry operators worldwide, it has proved its worth, too, in emergency and disaster situations by ensuring rapid deliveries of vital aid.

The all-steel sprung Arocs 4148 chassis is rated at 41 tonnes GVW but plated for operation at 32 tonnes.

Its 12.8-litre in-line six-cylinder engine produces 350kW and is paired with a 12-speed Mercedes PowerShift 3 automated manual transmission.

The vehicle underwent conversion from standard 8x4 configuration to all-wheel drive by Mercedes-Benz Trucks' Custom Tailored Trucks (CTT) division at Molsheim in France.

To ensure the best possible traction, all four axles have differential locks and the wheels

are shod with heavy-duty 14.00R20 tyres.

Factory-painted in Austrian Army Grey with colour-coded bumpers, the truck's ClassicSpace M-cab is equipped with a full complement of advanced driver aids.

These include MirrorCam, the ground-breaking camera-based alternative to conventional mirrors, and the upgraded interactive version of the radical Multimedia Cockpit dashboard, which replaces switchgear with twin, tablet-style screens, one with 'touch' functionality.

Explaining the rationale behind the company's decision to base its first, wholly-owned demonstrator on a Mercedes-Benz chassis, FAUN Trackway's Neil Wigley said the company

wanted a vehicle that would offer a turnkey solution.

specially modified this 8x8 monster for the job.

The vehicle has been fitted with hook-loading equipment and has a mechanised body capable of laying up to 50 metres of interlocking M150 Trackway aluminium panels over undulating terrain in less than five minutes.

The 4.6m wide M150 Trackway is transported on a Spool,

# ExpressPuzzles

## SUDOKU

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

Rating: ★☆☆☆☆

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

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## SUDOKU

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

Rating: ★★☆☆☆

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

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## CROSSWORD

1			2		3		4		5		6			
					7					9				
8														
					10									
11					12					13				
14	15		16		17		18	19						20
21							22		23					
25										26				
28							29							

### ACROSS

- 1. Poked
- 5. Genghis ...
- 7. Lay oneself open to
- 8. Window ledge
- 9. Inscribe
- 10. Sparkle
- 11. Madness
- 13. Slope
- 14. Game park tour
- 18. Change title of
- 21. Criss-cross structure

- 22. Uneven (in quality)
- 24. Below
- 25. Territory, Puerto ...
- 26. Swoop
- 27. Turn upside-down
- 28. Performs slalom
- 29. Tribal seniors

### DOWN

- 1. Bumps roughly
- 2. Light timber
- 3. Drab

- 4. Conspirator
- 5. Moscow citadel
- 6. Praise
- 12. Aggressive dog
- 15. Ill on plane
- 16. Laborious
- 17. Chilled cuppa (4,3)
- 19. Argentina's ... Peron
- 20. Paris boulevard, Champs ...
- 22. Priggish person
- 23. Kept us going, ... us over

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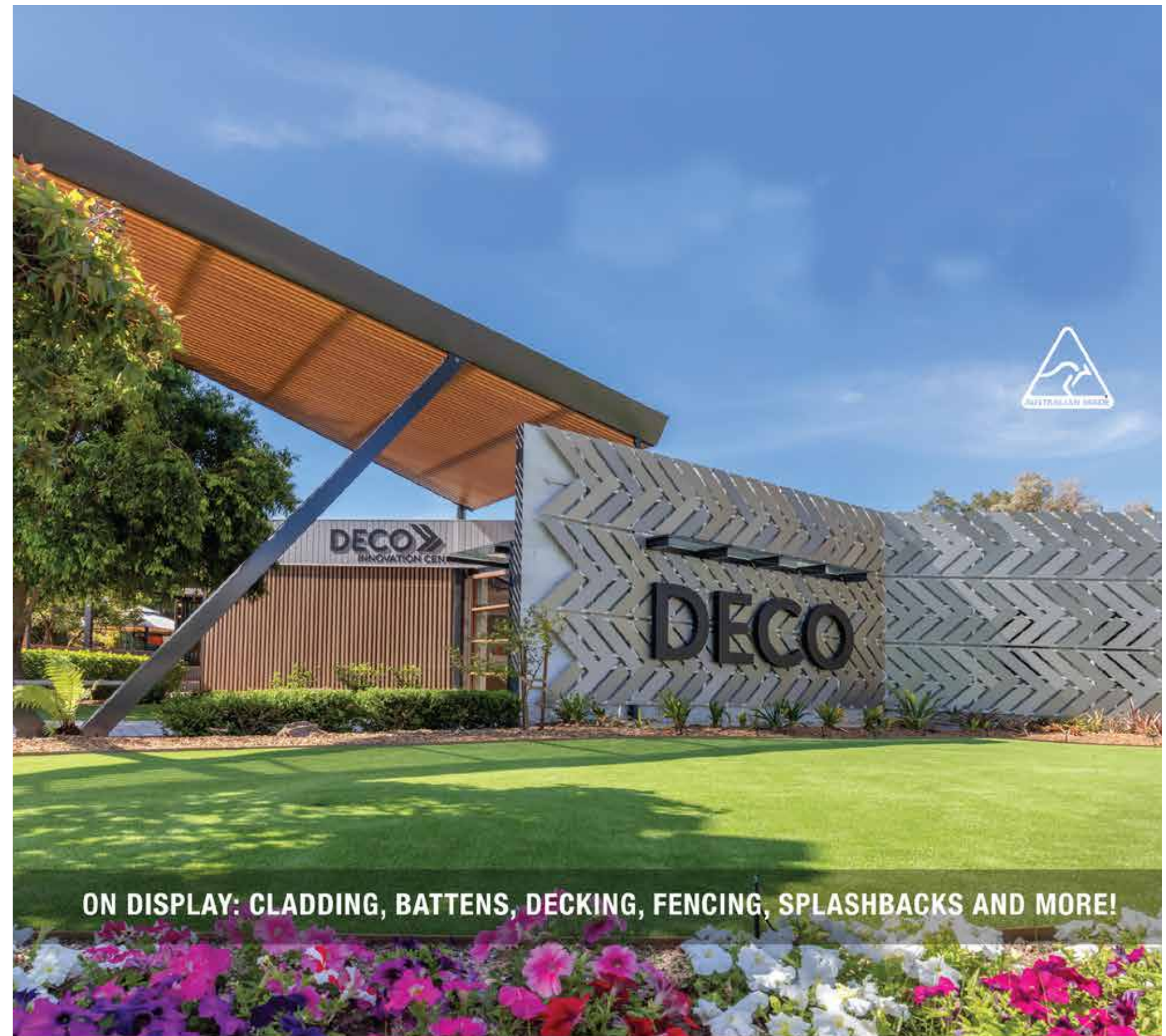
## WORDSEARCH: Sound Barrier

S	G	E	U	S	E	G	N	I	C	R	E	I	P	A
C	T	N	S	Y	I	L	M	E	L	T	T	A	R	U
P	R	E	A	I	S	L	K	J	S	E	A	O	E	D
Q	M	A	R	L	O	C	E	C	F	V	N	W	D	I
E	R	R	S	E	C	N	R	N	A	U	O	G	N	B
B	O	V	N	H	O	B	Z	E	C	C	S	S	U	L
Q	G	N	I	G	N	A	B	Q	A	E	E	D	H	E
S	D	B	Q	U	I	E	T	R	T	M	R	E	T	E
H	E	C	H	O	P	C	E	T	V	V	T	A	L	Z
R	K	N	R	M	L	S	N	M	O	S	F	F	E	Y
I	G	N	O	A	O	E	K	L	A	T	F	E	L	I
L	N	T	T	U	L	P	U	L	A	U	Z	N	G	R
L	S	T	N	I	W	M	B	M	M	X	V	I	N	V
F	E	D	S	B	E	E	P	L	G	W	N	N	A	X
R	S	R	E	S	O	N	A	N	C	E	B	G	J	B

## CROSSWORD SOLUTION

(upside down)

S	R	E	D	L	E	V	S	I	K	S				
E														
E	V	I	D	U	T	O	C	I	R					
S														
Y	H	C	T	A	P	E	R	I	D	G				
L														
E	M	A	N	E	R	I	A	F	A	S				
N	A	E	L	M	Y	C	A	N	U	L				
H	C	T	E	H	N	L	L	I	S					
N	V	A	H	K	S	D	E	B	B	V	J	A	B	B



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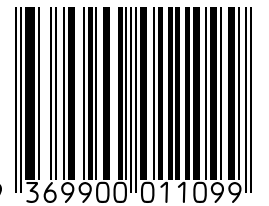
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# SPORT

ISSN 2653-6676



## Thirlmere Roosters win the grand final



Coach Darren McLeod and player of the match Hayden Sutton

The Thirlmere Roosters defeated the Camden Rams, who had only suffered one loss all season, last Sunday in the Group 6 rugby league grand final.

The first-grade grand final was held at Campbelltown Sports Stadium and finished with 28-26 on the scoreboard with the Roosters taking the lead in the last minutes.

First-grade coach Darren McLeod said the Roosters had built momentum playing all the way through the final rounds, and to top it off with the final win was the best way to finish.

"It's a very good feeling," he said. "Camden are a very good team, but we're a good team too,"

He said injuries had hampered the team early in the season, but by the grand final the Roosters were fielding a strong side.

Thirlmere started out well on Sunday, gaining a 14-6 lead on Camden. However, Camden came back and scored two tries with successful conversions and took the lead 18-14.

In the second half, Thirlmere scored again but failed to convert, allowing Camden to hold the lead.

In the last seven minutes Thirlmere scored a fifth try, but were still behind - until

the final three minutes, when they scored a sixth try and halfback Damon New kicked a successful conversion.

Mr McLeod said it would have been a challenging kick for Damon, who needed to make the conversion from the sideline nearest to the grandstand seating Camden's supporters.

"In the end it was a fitting result, with us putting six tries on to their four," he said. "The boys were very happy."

The coach said every player had earned his spot on the field with his performance on the day. The player of the match was fullback Hayden Sutton, from Thirlmere.

Mr McLeod said the grandstands in the larger stadium were around half-filled with supporters. He estimated there were about 1,000 spectators

He praised the families and friends who came to support, and who even "got a Roosters chant going".

"We had the ball boys there, who are juniors with the club ... our support was awesome," he said.

For more information about the Roosters, visit <https://www.facebook.com/TTJRL>

By Sky Carrall

Photos provided by Warren Gannon Photography



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