

The Manning Community News

MAY 2022

SHARING COMMUNITY NEWS AND VIEWS

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**RECLAIMING
RESILIENCE**

**AFTER PROLONGED
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Plus **Growing Up In
Country Australia**

**2BOB'S ENVIROFAIR
AND MULTICULTURAL
FESTIVAL *is back!***

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**GROWING
UP IN
COUNTRY
AUSTRALIA**

**Edited by
Rick Morton P 19**

Pass
this paper to
a friend or
neighbour
before
recycling

DO WE NEED THE PARRY'S COVE DEVELOPMENT AT TEA GARDENS, MYALL LAKES?

Yes we need houses. . . but we also need trees...

And koalas and clean waterways, and fresh air to breathe, and space around us, and economical homes designed with imagination.

So do we need approximately 900 houses in a pristine nature environment on the coast of NSW? Where the developer states every shrub, tree and bush will be cleared to just dirt as Parry's Cove Development Proposal specifically states -

"Extent of earthwork will entail removal of all vegetation and trees within the footprint of the site."

They might say the people wealthy enough to purchase these homes might do some planting and landscaping. But will they know their luxury home sits on a site where koalas and all manner of vegetation trees and wildlife once lived and thrived?

Such developments set a precedent already in tow for highrises, suburban developments and luxury home estates all the way along the NSW coast to meet and marry the glitzy Gold Coast.



The controversial property 7 Petrel Place, Tea Gardens

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

HOW TO WORK FOR PEACE?

The world can find money for war but not for peace. The world is now spending each year approximately US\$2.1 Trillion on military expenditure.

We could remake the world for that amount of money. Instead, we just seem to have wars and threats of war. Meanwhile, there is the collapse of Cold War nuclear weapon treaty system and speculation on the use of nuclear warfare over Ukraine.

We need to think about peace and disarmament differently. Here is an idea for a "Peace-Industrial Complex".

The term "Military-Industrial Complex" was popularised by President Eisenhower in his 1961 Farewell Address to Congress. He had been a professional soldier for most of his working life and had seen how the US military had been transformed from a small fighting force into a large permanent war-fighting establishment.

In 1940 the Greek army was larger than the US army. The US entered World War II on December 7 1941 (after the Japanese attack on

Pearl Harbour) and so there was a rapid expansion of the US defence forces. The US was transformed during 1941-5 and so ended the war as the world's major military power.

Eisenhower had lived through all this. As a traditional "small government" Republican he worried about how a new expensive industrial complex had been created to exploit the new military era - all at great cost to taxpayers. (The US now spends 38 per cent of the world's total military expenditure, but can't seem to win wars).

The small number of corporations in the Military-Industrial Complex are not necessarily violent or warlike: they just want to make a profit. The workers in the Military-Industrial Complex are not necessarily violent or warlike: they just want a job.

The factories and other facilities are scattered around the US. Any attempt (as President Clinton found out in the post-Cold War 1990s) to

cut back on military expenditure will hurt some voters in a constituency and so they lobby their member of Congress to protect their jobs.

In retrospect Clinton failed to provide a vision of what the conversion of military facilities to peaceful uses would entail. For example, all military contracts should contain a provision requiring the contractor to have alternative plans to cope with the ending of a military contract and the redeployment of the workers to peaceful purposes.

In my second PhD, I looked at the need for the creation of a "Peace-Industrial Complex". There is not a lack of ideas for disarmament - but a lack of political will. The creation of a Peace-Industrial Complex would be a way of generating political will.

Money is important for the shaping of US politics and so perhaps that same reasoning could be applied to ending the arms race:

corporations could use their influence in the interests of peace.

Only a handful of companies make money out of war. Many more benefit from peace (such as health, law, education, tourism, and fast food outlets).

Joan Kroc (1928-2003), the widow of the McDonald's CEO Ray Kroc, gave US\$50million for the University of Notre Dame for the Joan B Kroc Institute for Peace Studies. Her argument was that in the event of World War III there would not be a market for fast food. Therefore it would be necessary to mobilise businesses for peaceful interests. So the proposed Peace-Industrial Complex would need to campaign to ensure that as defence jobs declined, there would be a compensatory rise in the non-defence employment sector. (Health, education, welfare and public transport are all very labour intensive.)

A campaign for a Peace-Industrial Complex would require some new ways of thinking; such as new coalition thinking. It would require peace groups to be in a dialogue with business interests and business councils, such as institutes of company directors.

If we redefine "national security" from just a focus on military matters to also include economic and social indicators, then a Peace-Industrial Complex would also attract support from welfare and anti-poverty groups.

The growing popular action on climate change has already generated some new coalitions; such as the insurance industry being aware of the economic impact of climate change. We could finance environmental programmes via the conversion of military expenditure to environmental protection.

So the campaign for a Peace-Industrial Complex would require our creating a holistic vision of future society to inspire a wide variety of organisations, companies and individuals to work together.

Keith Suter
www.globaldirections.com.au



KARL ATTENBOROUGH

Candidate for Lyne

Harrington resident Karl Attenborough is a former NSW Police Officer and a Professional Sponsored Angler. Karl is a passionate advocate for social justice, ethical and sustainable fishing and protection of the environment.

Karl supports:

- **Open, transparent and accountable** Government
- **Affordable, secure and quality housing** for all Australians
- Universal **free education** and **childcare**
- **National jobs** and income guarantee
- **A caring society** for older Australians
- Tackling the **Climate Emergency**
- **Making the billionaires and big corporations** pay their fair share of tax

VOTE 1 GREENS IN LYNE

Vote The Greens into the balance of power

Authorised by D. Hayden for The Greens NSW, Suite D, 263-279 Broadway, Glebe NSW 2037



SOLD! FOR \$1!

The community of Bulahdelah is furious at the abrupt closure planned for their Aged Care Home, Cedar Wharf Lodge, at the end of May by Anglican Care.



As much as the upheaval and distress the sudden plan is causing residents, relatives and staff, is the fact the community raised a large portion of the money to build the Aged Care Home in the first place.

Donations came from practically every resident to match the amount needed over and above what the government had allocated for the building. Close to \$500,000 was raised from one of the poorest towns in the state and the Great Lakes Nursing Home opened in town in 1992. (It was later named Cedar Wharf Lodge when Anglican Care took over.)

Most residents are local, as is the staff.

But in more recent times the Home has become outdated with four beds sharing a single bathroom.

In 2017, the Home, while clean and tidy with caring staff, needed to be updated and to fill its 50 beds. So when Anglican Care offered to take it over, the Community Board which ran the Home was relieved and agreed. And in a deal which now many shake their head at, it was sold for a gold coin to the Church.

But the Cedar Wharf Lodge was not updated or refurbished. And in the last few years, little changed or was improved, despite needing a refit.

Nonetheless it came as a severe shock when Anglican Care an-

nounced in March that they were closing the Home and residents and families were told they had until the end of May to find other places. The reason for selling was that the Home was in debt with accumulated losses of 1.2 million dollars.

A community meeting was called in the middle of March with the Archbishop of Newcastle, Dr Peter Stuart, Federal MP Dr David Gillespie, MCC Mayor Clare Pontin, and the Board Manager of the Home attending. Also present was Mr Ireland who was on the original community board before the Home was sold to Anglican Care Australia.

Around 1000 locals came along and didn't like what they heard. Nor were many happy with the attitude of the Bishop whom many felt was more focussed on financials than the future of the residents. The community still doesn't know what Anglican Care plan, to do - sell or redevelop.

Families are distressed their loved ones will be a minimum of 45 minutes drive away at best, which is a massive inconvenience for elderly drivers and working families.

The residents of the Home are also distressed.

Said Bulahdelah local, Julie Smee, 'I know of one elderly male resident in the Home who was 99 and said he wouldn't move. He put his head on the pillow and just died.'

There are other meetings in the area planned, but added Mrs Smee, 'Judging from the Bishop's attitude, he won't change his mind. We are all disappointed at this and the need for better medical facilities locally.'

Greens Senate candidate Karl Attenborough who attended the meeting is shocked and says the Greens want the Government to allocate at least 6 billion dollars for Aged Care. (By taxing billionaires and corporations who currently pay little or no tax.)

"My concerns regarding this matter are, that despite the recent findings and recommendations of the Aged Care Royal Commission, aged care residents and workers are still suffering. Quality Aged Care should be based on individual needs and not the ability to pay or where one lives," he added.

Labor candidate Alex Simpson is also appalled at the unexpected closure of the Aged Care Home and has pledged to make a difference here as well as get Manning Base Hospital funded and improved. The closing of Cedar Wharf Lodge will have significant impacts on this community. Not only will residents be without a nursing home, but the important link between residents and their friends and family in the Bulahdelah community will be torn. Staff will also be left without a job, and other health services will inevitably have to cover

the shortfall in care. The care economy is central to this community's wellbeing, and this region's growth. Labor is pledging significant support to aged care, after nine years of a government missing in action.

At the conclusion of an unsatisfactory meeting, locals grumbled that the Anglican Church seem more focussed on money than people to "pay off the Church's debt". And that much as the community was disappointed in the neglect by the Nationals, they were afraid that the two sawmills in the area might be closed down, causing severe unemployment.

This is typical of our rural towns, who need to be convinced that there are more job opportunities with renewables and the race to re-tool for a sustainable and environmentally focused future.

The fear many have is that the Home will be sold to developers and "flash units or a fancy lifestyle home will go in there, when it's *ours!*" Appeals and contact made to the Minister for Aged Care Richard Colbeck went unanswered.

A gesture at the end of the meeting summed things up when a woman bent down and put a gold coin in front of the Bishop asking "Now we're square, please give us back our land and building."

Her offer is still open.



Dr. David GILLESPIE

THE NATIONALS FOR LYNE

Manning Valley secures \$5.5 million for new Taree Universities Campus

Recently, I was delighted to announce that \$5.5-million in additional Federal funding has been secured for the Taree Universities Campus.

The funding will provide TUC with a long-term permanent home in the former Council Chambers Building in Pulteney Street.

Two years ago, \$2-million in Federal funding was secured to establish Taree Universities Campus which has been operating in the Stacks Finance Building opposite what will become its new premises. In just over a year of operation over 180 students are registered and studying through the local facilities. As the campus continues to grow, more and more face-to-face learning will be rolled out including local pastoral and academic support, as well as industry mentorship and placements programs.



Surf's Up at Forster Main Beach Foreshore

Forster's historic Main Beach foreshore is set for a \$6.3 million facelift with a \$3.159 million investment from the Federal Government to help upgrade the 50-year-old Forster Surf Life Saving Clubhouse. Long serving Forster SLSC President and volunteer surf patroller for 23 years, John Quinn, said the new building would serve the needs of the community for the next 50 years. Further Federal funding of \$250,000 has been announced for the Forster Main Beach Retaining Wall.

\$4.47 million Cancer Care Manning Great Lakes

Work will begin soon on developing the new radiotherapy and oncology services located in Taree and Forster. Consultation rooms will be located in both centres with the first LINAC machine to be built in Taree in the Manning Base Hospital precinct. The new service will mean locals will no longer have to travel to Newcastle or Port Macquarie to receive treatment.



GETTING IT DONE *for Lyne*

He Listens. He Cares. He Delivers.

Our region has secured record Federal funding for hundreds of projects across our region. Some of the recent and current projects underway include:

- ✓ \$44,205,312 - 2018-2022 Financial Assistance Grants package - MidCoast Council
- ✓ \$16,962,314 - 2019-2023 Roads to Recovery funding package - MidCoast Council
- ✓ \$14,905,682 - Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Package - MidCoast Council
 - ✓ \$1 million - Wingham CBD Beautification
 - ✓ \$1.2 million - Manning Entertainment Centre
 - ✓ \$400,000 - Old Bar Foreshore Park upgrade
 - ✓ \$400,000 - Wingham Sporting Complex
 - ✓ \$700,000 - Omaru Park Upgrade
 - ✓ \$850,000 - Tuncurry Water Park - New Splash Park
 - ✓ \$300,000 - Nabiac Town Centre - Nabiac Creek Restoration
 - ✓ \$350,000 - Pacific Palms Footpath - Extend the existing footpath
 - ✓ \$500,000 - Forster Boardwalk Extension - Completion of the pelican boardwalk
 - ✓ \$250,000 - Tuncurry Rock Pool - Park & Recreation Improvements
 - ✓ \$400,000 - John Wright Park Tuncurry - Park & Recreation Improvements
 - ✓ \$250,000 - Forster Main Beach Retaining Wall
 - ✓ \$300,000 - Gloucester Netball court reconstruction and new amenities
 - ✓ \$200,000 - Coomba Park tidal pool
- ✓ \$23,870,431 - Road Safety Program - MidCoast Council
- ✓ \$200 Million - Federal funding for Aged Care and Home Care increased from \$90 million in 2013
- ✓ \$11 million - MidCoast Water - Water infrastructure upgrades
- ✓ \$435,988 - Harrington Community Facility
- ✓ \$3.2 million - First Steps Count Child and Community Centre
- ✓ \$3.5 million - Headspace Manning-Great Lakes
- ✓ \$8.5 million - Fig Trees on the Manning
- ✓ \$8.251 million - Taree "Iron Arena" Stadium
- ✓ \$9.3 million - Taree Northern Gateway Project
- ✓ \$50,000 - Nabiac Sports Fields Lights Upgrade
- ✓ \$179,900 - Tuncurry - Peel Street to Kent Street
- ✓ University of Newcastle Department of Rural Health Campus in Taree - \$32.9 million over 3 years for its rural health training activities across its network
- ✓ \$987,544 - Taree Resource Recovery Centre
- ✓ \$41 million - Bucketts Way Upgrade
- ✓ \$48 million - Coopernook-Harrington Overpass
- ✓ \$689,000 - Improvements at Tuncurry Racecourse
- ✓ \$3.6 million - Safety upgrades on the Failford Road/Pacific Highway intersection
- ✓ \$742,125 - New Community Hall & Evacuation Centre for Rainbow Flat
- ✓ \$4 million - New The Lakes Way/Blackhead Road intersection roundabout
- ✓ \$300,000 - Improvements to Nabiac Memorial Park
- ✓ \$150,000 - Great Lakes United Football Club Amenities Upgrade
- ✓ \$6 million - Forster Civic Precinct project
- ✓ \$8 million - Anglican Care, Mirrabooka Aged Care and Retirement Village, Gloucester
- ✓ \$300,000 - Stroud TV Tower



Following recent discussions with MidCoast Council, the following local projects will be recommended to the Department of Infrastructure for Federal funding as part of the recent extension of the Local Roads & Community Infrastructure Fund in the Budget.

- ✓ \$400,000 - Harrington's Esmond Hogan Oval upgrade
- ✓ \$500,000 - Pacific Palms Community Centre upgrade
- ✓ \$150,000 - Gloucester Swimming Pool
- ✓ \$50,000 - Nabiac Showground Hall upgrade
- ✓ \$130,000 - Winda Woppa Boat ramp upgrade at Hawks Nest
- ✓ \$100,000 - Barrington Hall upgrade
- ✓ \$250,000 - Bulahdelah Showground upgrade
- ✓ \$30,000 - Booral Community Hall upgrade
- ✓ \$30,000 - Bunyah Community Hall upgrade
- ✓ Taree Wildcats Omaru Park upgrade

MidCoast Council has also earmarked \$1.7 million of the funds from the program for additional works to the Rural Road Network. Including road overlay and stabilised pavement projects on a number of local roads including:

- ✓ Lansdowne Road
- ✓ Central Lansdowne Road
- ✓ Upper Lansdowne Road
- ✓ Hannam Vale Road
- ✓ Wherrol Flat Road
- ✓ Wallanbah Road
- ✓ Oxley Street in Taree

Dr. David GILLESPIE
THE NATIONALS FOR LYNE

THE NATIONALS for Regional Australia

Wauchope Office

☎ 02 6586 4462 📍 Corner of High and Hastings Streets, Wauchope, NSW 2446

Taree Office

☎ 02 6557 8910 📍 144 Victoria Street, Taree, NSW 2430

✉ david.gillespie.mp@aph.gov.au 📘 DavidGillespieMP

📷 david_gillespie_mp 🐦 davegillespiemp

Authorised by Dr David Gillespie, The Nationals, 144 Victoria Street, Taree, NSW 2430.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The process of getting a significant development approved these days is up there with the best of the TV high dramas. However public awareness or interest is pretty minimal as often things slide through approval processes which, let's face it, do not have high viewing ratings!

But the saga of Parry's Cove could soon rate with the best of TV's dramas or horror movie.

The synopsis is as follows - find one of the most stunning areas of the Myall Lakes near Tea Gardens with significant early Australian history, beautiful natural habitat which once supported wildlife and a large koala population plus Aboriginal middens and possibly heritage artefacts, and a deeply connected

Indigenous community.

WELL KEPT SECRET

Following its historical significance, over the generations pockets of white settlers grew within the area, but until the past decade or two, it remained still something of quiet backwater.

Sure, it got a mention when then PM John and Janette Howard took their annual holidays in the unpretentious setting.

Like a lot of similar precious, unspoiled and stunning locales along the NSW north coast, families and tourists had their fave spots for family hols. And the hidden gem they liked to keep to themselves was Tea Gardens/Hawks Nest. This Worimi land straddles land north of Port Stephens.

It was formally dominated by Swamp Mahogany (Eucalyptus robusta) with an understorey of Wallum Banksia (Banksia aemula) this was a swamp but indeed a beautiful one, once largely inhabited by Koalas, Wallum froglets, Squirrel Gliders and other Threatened Species.

In 1824 a land grant of 1 million acres on the northern shores of Port Stephens was

handed to the white settlers who'd formed the Australian Agricultural Company (AACo) to improve wool production of flocks of Merino sheep and crops like Tobacco.

AACO

Headquarters for AACo were built at beautiful Tahlee, a local Worimi word meaning "sheltered from the wind and above water". An apt name as a lot of the Fens Embayment and sand ridge country was largely a swamp.

The area was named after William Parry, an explorer who was knighted in 1829, and aged 39, with his wife, Lady Isabella Louisa Parry, settled in Tahlee as AACo Commissioner in 1830 with nearly 18,000 sheep at pasture on this Port Stephens 'Carrington' estate.

The present Parry's Cove site originally was called 'Riverside' by Crighton Properties around the year 2000 but over the past decade it's been known as 'Parry's Cove'.

The present developers (Sheargold) explain in their sales material that -

"The word 'Cove' was selected because it is a descriptor referring to the river bend adjacent to the property and its ability for the essence of the word to invoke a feeling of comfort, protection and security to the community's future residents."

"A number of precincts, each with their individual character and history

combine to make up the Parry's Cove community and throughout the course of the development we will explore and celebrate more great stories of this area for future generations to come."

But within this much touted new development in Myall Lakes, an actual cove doesn't exist. Yet.

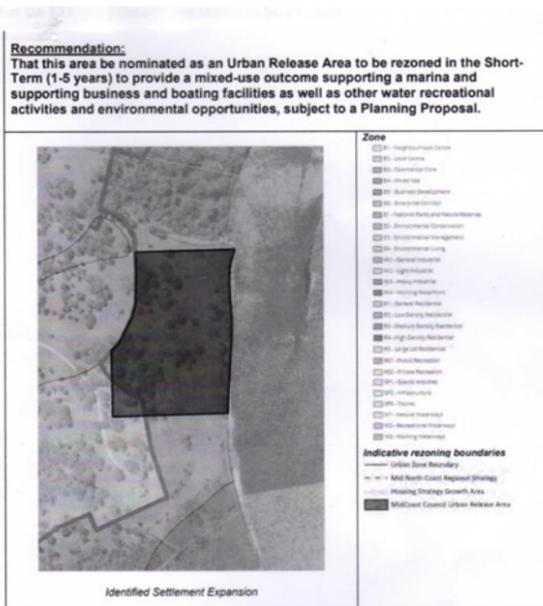
Sheargold's sophisticated sales material states that it intends to commence construction in 2023 -

"The Parry's Cove Masterplan connects the entire development to the Cove on the eastern side of the project. Through the inclusion of a main green and blue spine through the centre of the development Sheargold have been able to integrate the new living environment with the existing Myall River. This includes protecting and enhancing the natural environment."

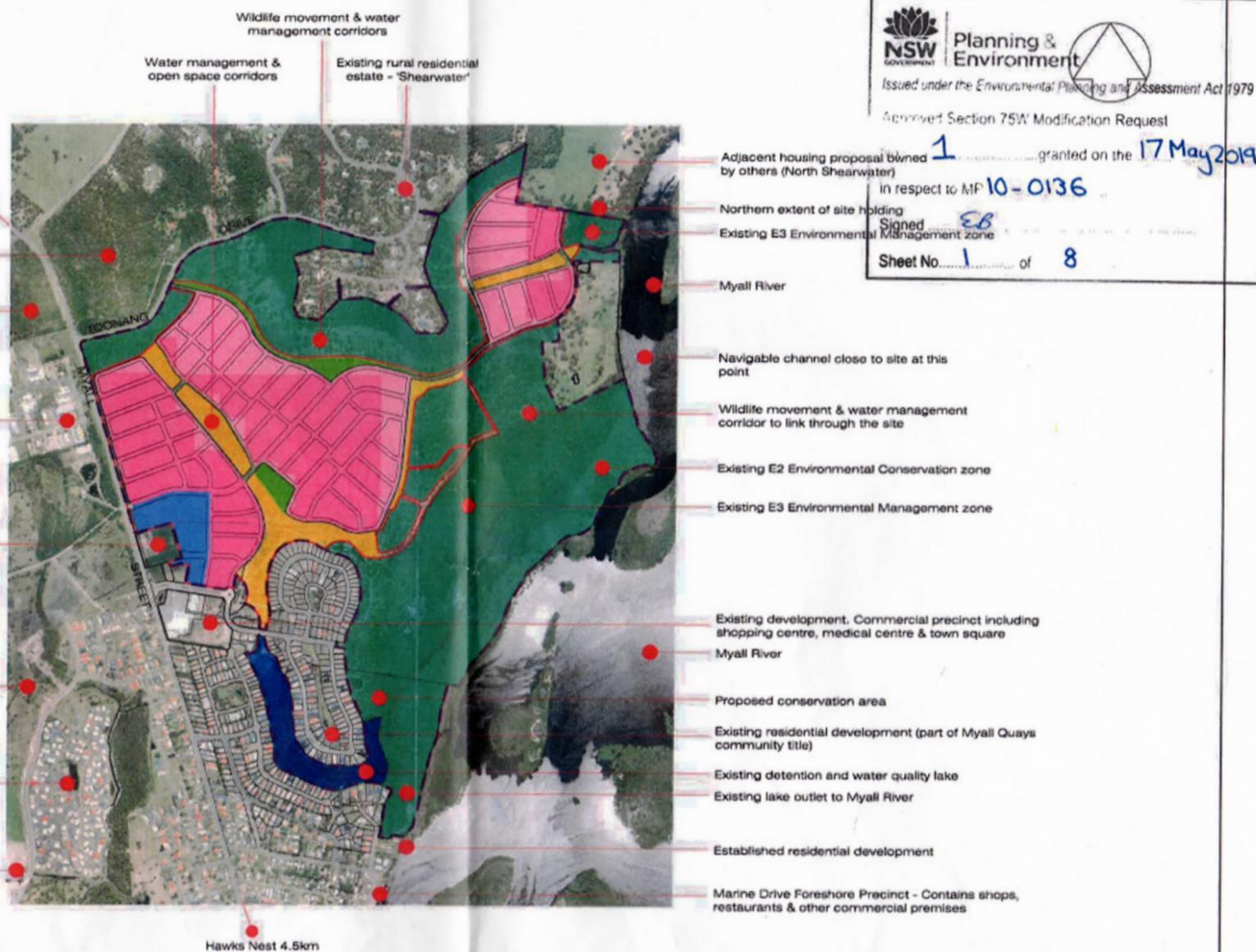
One has to wonder how on one piece of paper the natural landscape land has so be scrubbed clean and then be "protected and enhanced". This and more fluffy adjectives might sound great to prospective buyers but there is the small matter that this Parry's Cove Development doesn't have an actual cove, which to many of us would give the illusion of a marina, boating, luxury cruisers etc.

REGIONAL PLANNING PANEL

In March this year I was one of many who watched the Zoom meeting to hear speakers addressing Shear-



Distance to:	
Pacific Hwy	12km
Karahah	24km
Bulahdelah	39km
Raymond Terrace	51km
Newcastle	76km
Sydney	215km



gold Pty Ltd, Parry's Cove Planning Proposal being heard before the Regional Planning Panel. This panel consisted of Sandra Hutton, Juliet Grant, Councillor Kathryn Bell, Deputy Mayor Alan Tickle, and the chairperson Alison McCabe. Speakers for and against the proposal were selected to give their views to the convenor via zoom or phone.

However the Chair of the Panel did rather interrupt some speakers to a degree that would not be tolerated even in our Parliaments.

Several speakers who'd put in submissions and had businesses locally were all for the development to enhance and enlarge the town.

Other submissions were against it on environmental grounds.

But when the articulate CEO of the Karuah Land Council spoke she very firmly raised her concerns.

"I thank this Regional Planning Panel for hearing my Submissions. My name is Shai Richardson and I am the CEO of the Karuah Local Aboriginal Land Council.

I am a Worimi woman. I present this submission on behalf of Elders, past and present and our Karuah Local Aboriginal Land Council community. We are the traditional custodians of lands that include Parry's Cove.

We, the Karuah Local Aboriginal Land Council are against the present DA 171/2020 development application that is known as Parry's Cove.

Karuah Local Aboriginal Land Council (KLALC) have made two submissions to this Development Proposal, but I have no idea if you, this Regional Planning Panel have received our two submissions. The General Manager of the MidCoast Council, Mr. Panuccio, has assured us by email that he was sending our second submission to you, however I can find no mention of our concerns regarding 7 Petrel Place, Tea Gardens, a home within Lot 10 within the proposed Parry's Cove overall site. We had made representations to Council on the legality of this house - but have received no reply. This house is in close proximity to our Midden Site - known as Riverside 01.

KLALC mention to you that we have no idea of certain matters as Council never placed any submissions received for the Voluntary Planning Agreement on Council's website although KLALC is aware that the General Manager advised Councillor Alan Tickle on 22 February 2022 that Council would be placing all submissions on Council's website after 4pm on 22 February 2022.

So, Councillor Tickle, now we see you as a representative on this Regional Planning Panel today, KLALC ask. 'What happened?'

Why weren't any submissions on the Parry's Cove Voluntary Planning Agreement placed on Council's website or provided to Councillors?'

The Chair cuts in -

"Shai, this is we are not dealing

with procedural aspects of the VPA agreement we actually dealing with this development. Think it would be if you just concentrate on that and as I said at beginning. I don't want question directed at Panel members, uhm,....It is not a Q&A. The only question I'm prepared to answer were procedural ones, just this is the application, it would be good if you would deal with that. I can't deal with procedural stuff relating to the VPA, as it's not the panel responsibility."

Shai Richardson returned to her original question.

"That's fine, so going forward, have you got our two submissions?"

The Chair responds-

"I definitely have one submission, so I will make inquiry of Council. I have one submission in front of me that was in relation to this application dated 7 December ah, I will check with Council if there is another one..."

Significantly the particular missing Karuah submission was about the legality of land fill coming onto the Parry's Cove site over this last decade and has raised questions as to the legality of a house - known as 7 Petrel Place, Tea Gardens.

Ms Richardson continued,

"We, the Karuah Local Aboriginal Land Council again reiterate that this Parry's Cove site has been continually desecrated over the decades, with imported fill, levelling of natural features, removal of treed vegetation, particularly required by Koalas and other threatened species habitat...."

KLALC totally disagrees with the current position of accepted Biodiversity Offsets and impacts on this Parry's Cove site.

KLALC again state that we find no mention of our concerns on 7 Petrel Place, Tea Gardens. Where is the DA application and Approval for this major house construction? Why hasn't MidCoast Council answered our concerns? We, the KLALC advise that unless our concerns of what we consider to be wilful desecration of the former 'Riverside site' - now known as Parry's Cove - and problems with the Aboriginal Heritage reports and the imported fill, plus 7 Petrel Place - are addressed in meetings with the Developer, then we remain against the Approval of DA 171 / 2020 by you, this Regional Planning Panel.

KLALC has not given permission for all these acts against our Aboriginal Heritage.

We have tried to get the permissions from Council for these developer activities - but we are going nowhere.

KLALC advise that we are giving most serious consideration to having this Parry's Cove development proposal placed before the Federal Supreme Court under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act (2005)....

"Thank you for giving me the opportunity of addressing you today," summed up CEO Ms Richardson.

Her mentioning that one of her submissions against the development did not seem to be included was a bit

of a bombshell.

(Though it's not an uncommon occurrence at MidCoast Council where submissions can go missing unless the sender jumps up and down for it to be found. Many people never notice their submissions aren't made public or else are severely redacted.)

The Ceo was not alone. Other submissions spoke about 'Where is the fill coming from?' 'What about the Koalas? Why is this proposed development occurring on swamp land? What about all the trees? What about Federal Environment Minister Susan Ley recently listing the Koala as Endangered in NSW, and also unsatisfactory replies from the Developer's representatives.

ONCE A SWAMP...

Land approved by council to be set aside as offset land within the development, will, it seems, be of little interest to koalas and other wildlife as it is an uninhabitable swamp for them.

However, just speculating, if one was to dig out said swamp, it could become a lovely waterway. Rather like a cove. Leaving you with maybe 40,000 truckloads of fill to dispose of.

Otherwise where will approximately half a million cubic metres of fill, requiring truck and dog trailer deliveries at exorbitant delivery charges come from? Will these proposed truck movements from a distance away be appreciated by the local Tea Gardens residents, let alone damage to their roads?

The answer as to where and how the fill required on which to build houses is yet to be clearly answered.

MARINA?

However in the MidCoast Council's Urban Release Report of 205 pages dated July 2021, take a look on page 106 where it states -

"Recommendation.

That this area (this refers to 7 Petrel Place Lot 10. ed.) be nominated as an Urban Release Area to be rezoned in the ShortTerm (1-5 years) to provide a mixed use outcome supporting a marina and supporting business and boating facilities as well as other water recreational activities and environmental opportunities, subject to a Planning Proposal."

So, the bigger question is 'Why didn't the Parry's Cove developer include this 10 hectares of land that they own on the bank of the Myall River in their Development Proposal before the Regional Planning Panel on 16 March 2022?'

Following Ms Richardson's reference to 7 Petrel Place the Panel requested 'further information' from MidCoast Council on DA 171 / 2020 for Parry's Cove, including - "Clarification on the location and relevance of 7 Petrel Place as it relates to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage".

Note that the Panel did not ask

Council to confirm whether 7 Petrel Place was a legally DA approved dwelling.

Subsequently the MidCoast Council clarification was -

"7 Petrel Place is Lot 10 DP 270100. And incorporates stages 15, 16a and 16b, which are not recommended for approval under this application".

And what was the MidCoast Council's Recommendation for the Parry's Cove Development Proposal on 16 March 2022?

They recommended APPROVAL.

And yet by 18 March 2022 - the Council recommendation for stages 15 and 16 was DISAPPROVAL.

So 7 Petrel Place was withdrawn from the development before going to council, but has now been excluded by the Regional Planning Panel, and one can't help but wonder why. It seems 7 Petrel Place, which is a large waterfront mansion, has something of a question mark over it!

But it seems the developer isn't worried about the Regional Planning Panel decision problem, as it is now proposed for 900 allotments!

So, after being knocked back it seems all you need to do is put another planning proposal before MidCoast Council.

But what about the "cove"?

Is the answer in Sheargold's Press Release for Parry's Cove where it says - *"Sarah Thompson of Sheargold Property Developments Pty. Ltd. is excited for the future of the development.*

It is envisaged the entire Parry's Cove community will deliver approximately 900 dwellings once approval is obtained for a further two stages and plans are submitted to MidCoast Council for a diversity of housing choices across the site Ms. Thompson said".

CLIMATE FUTURE?

Perhaps somebody should take a good scientific look as to where the sea level (and the level of the Myall River) will be within the next 50 years or so.

Perhaps Sheargold Developments might consider a Venice Style development?

Of course our Council will be rubbing their hands together at the prospect of rates and developer fees from 900 upmarket homes!

One suspects this is not the last we'll hear in the expensive drama of Parrys Cove. Stay tuned.

(The full Determination and Statement of Reasons of the NSW Government Regional Planning Panel (4 April 2022) and Audio for DA 171 / 2020 Myall Way, Tea Gardens, Parry's Cove is available on the Internet. This includes names of those mentioned in this article.)

DM

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Retirement Living



Home Care



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Calvary

1800 52 72 72

www.calvarycare.org.au

GLOUCESTER COULD SHOW THE WAY... IF...

One of the first questions asked of newcomers to Gloucester is, "Why have you chosen here?" Inevitably the answer will be, "Because of the countryside. The wooded hills and pristine rivers."

Residents talk of that sigh of relief when they see the valley after being away; The sense of peace that washes over them.

Yet, this golden asset, our natural environment, is at risk. Outdated practices of burning, poisoning and tree clearing abound. Though unfortunately, for some the constant alarm of climate change consequences does not exist.

For every tree that is planted, hundreds are cut down, or the trees planted are not suitable as food, or homes for our native fauna.

Koalas, now listed as endangered, are adored, but responsibility for their existence is ignored by many who prefer a manicured lawn dotted with exotics.

Who is at fault for our loss of habitat? Blame is often directed at our Council. The real story is more complex. The NSW Government

State of the Environment 2021 report, says that land clearing has increased threefold over the last decade. The report is sobering, and an indictment on our environmental laws. Our NSW State Government regulations for land clearing and tree removal, the striking out of the Native Vegetation Act, are woefully inadequate.

MidCoast Council recently adopted a Biodiversity Framework, Greening Strategy and Vegetation Management Policy but implementation of these initiatives relies heavily on State legislation and property owner support.

Gloucester and surrounds are a green oasis in a Shire that is attracting newcomers who desire a relaxed and peaceful lifestyle.

Retaining and conserving the natural environment for all to enjoy is the responsibility of the NSW State Government, MidCoast Council and

also, the residents of Gloucester.

However, this enjoyment of our natural environment could be enhanced by increased nature walkways and cycleways. By drawing attention to the assets of bush, rivers, and native wildlife, particularly the abundant birdlife.

Our links to our Aboriginal history and culture are largely ignored. For thousands of years this land was home to Aboriginal people who spoke Gathung; the language of the Worimi, Biripi and Guringal peoples. In the Gloucester area any reference or acknowledgement to their rich culture, the oldest in the world, is nowhere to be seen.

Gloucester, historically a meeting place for Aboriginal tribes, should embrace this connection by renaming streets and parks. A welcome sign with this recognition, at the entrances to town, should be essential.

The fight to conserve our natural environment includes embracing renewable energy. While Gloucester does boast a successful Community Energy organisation, with a solar farm awaiting construction, it could also be a Community Energy Hub. Community energy can revitalise regional communities. It can play a critical role in building resilience for regions such as Gloucester. Solar panels on roofs is one step, but so much more could be achieved as a Community Energy Hub if grants and loans to develop new community energy projects were available.

The Gloucester area has much to offer residents and visitors. By conserving the natural environment, acknowledging Aboriginal culture, and embracing renewable energy it could offer so much more.

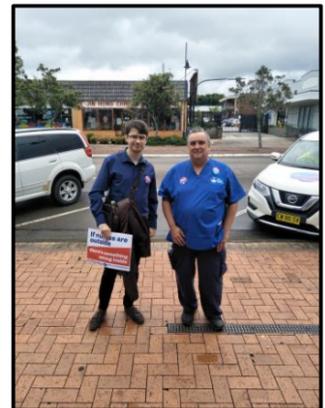
Dianne Montague
Gloucester.



HEALTH

When it comes to health, Lyne has been left behind. I'll advocate to **improve the Manning Base Hospital**, as well as supporting:

- Urgent care clinics
- Further newborn health screening
- Undoing cuts to regional mental telehealth
- Nurse wellbeing support



to ensure less aged care residents end up in emergency rooms, we'll help fund a **nurse on site 24/7, better food standards, and an average of 215 minutes of daily care.**

JOBS

- Made in Australia Plan
- Same Job, Same Pay
- Criminalise Wage Theft
- Cheaper Childcare

SKILLS

- 465,000 Fee-free TAFE Places
- 20,000 Extra Uni Places
- New Energy Apprentices
- Schools Upgrade Fund

ENERGY

- Save an estimated \$275/year on Power by 2025
- Around 500,000 regional jobs
- 43% less emissions by 2030

Labor for Lyne on Facebook



How to Vote Labor



PLAYMATES AND PUGGLES

Next to the koala and kangaroo, Australia's most iconic animal is the platypus (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*). So uniquely odd is the platypus that when the first (dead) specimens were sent back to England they were considered hoaxes.

Platypuses are superbly adapted to their aquatic environment. They have flat, streamlined bodies and extensive webbing on their powerful front feet which propels them through the water. Like humans but unlike most other aquatic animals they swim by using alternative strokes of their front limbs.

The back feet are used as rudders and brakes whilst the paddle-like tail acts as a stabiliser and as fat storage (holding up to 40% of the platypus' total weight). The fur is dense and waterproof thus providing excellent insulation. Eyes and nostrils which shut when diving underwater are relatively small and placed dorsally in a groove.

The famous 'duck bill' is covered by soft sensitive skin and incorporates the platypus's 'super sense', about 40,000 electroreceptor cells which, similar to sharks, allows them to pick up on the electrical signals of prey animals such as larval insects and small crustaceans.

Instead of teeth adults have flat pads of gum tissue with which they grind their prey, and cheek pouches in which to store it.

They also have unusually low body temperature for mammals of 32 degrees Celsius and can maintain this constantly even during long submersions in water as cold as 4 degrees. Research has shown that they also slow their heart rate when diving from a normal rate of 140-230 beats per minute to 10 to 120. Their blood oxygen levels also fall rapidly but are restored just as quickly once surfaced.

They range in length from 38 to 60 cm with males generally larger than females. Mainland platypuses are generally smaller than those found in Tasmania. The fur is dark to light brown on top with a lighter underside and white patches under the eyes.

Males have a spur on the inner side of each ankle which can release a venom powerful enough to kill small animals and cause intense pain in larger ones, including humans. It is thought that this is used mostly in self-defence but can also play a role in territorial and dominance disputes



A Platypus pair play in a creek. (photo Neil Edwards.)

during breeding season.

Probably the most remarkable thing about the platypus is, along with echidnas, that they are the world's only living monotremes. This means that although classified as mammals (warm blooded) they lay eggs rather than give birth to live young. They also lactate or feed their young milk from mammary gland ducts although they do not have nipples. Rather the milk oozes out and collects in grooves where the young lap it or suck it from tufts of fur.

Monotremes are considered to be ancient species with the first fossil records of platypus-like creatures dating back to 110 million years ago when Australia was still part of the Gondwana landmass along with South America and Antarctica.

Today there is still not a lot known about platypuses although fears that they may be in decline is prompting a renewed focus from conservation groups, university researchers and government bodies alike, including our MidCoast Council.

Historically platypuses have been found in a wide variety of fresh water habitats in the Eastern States (with the exception of Far North Queensland) from alpine areas to coastal fresh waters. However their secretive natures mean they are rarely seen. They forage mostly between dusk and dawn although sometimes they will be sighted in daylight, particularly if it is cloudy or there is limited food.

During the daylight hours most

will usually be hidden away in burrows. They prefer to dig or occupy burrows in steep stable river and creek banks that contain roots and overhanging vegetation including trees. Burrows are typically 3 to 6 metres long and can be blocked with plugs of compacted soil.

Platypuses are typically solitary animals and territorial except when breeding, usually in August. Males will fight each other during the breeding season using their ankle spurs and inflict significant wounds. Courtship and mating occurs in the water and involves a slow dance wherein the male holds the female by the tail with his bill while the female leads them both through a series of circles, twists and turns on the water surface.

Once mating has occurred Platypuses return to their solitary ways with the male taking no part in rearing the young. Females will construct specially built nursery burrows where usually two leathery eggs are laid. Gestation is between two weeks and a month. The female incubates the eggs by curling around them with her tail touching her bill. After another 6 to 10 days the tiny young platypuses, called puggles, will hatch from their eggs with the aid of special egg teeth.

The young grow quickly increasing their weight up to 20 times from hatching and after three to four months become independent, usually between January and early March. They reach adult size between 12 and 18 months and sexual maturity at 18

months. They have been known to live for 20 years in the wild and nearly 23 years in captivity.

Platypuses face a number of threats. Chemical spills into waterways, droughts, and sedimentation washing in from developments have all been known to wipe out populations. Foxes and feral cats can prey on them when they are forced to travel overland in search of new territories or deep enough pools during drought periods. Impact on their prey from fertilisers and other chemicals can also threaten their ability to survive.

Loss of habitat in terms of appropriate banks with vegetation through floods, urbanisation, agriculture, dams and excessive water harvesting are major threats. It is believed that suitable platypus habitat may have shrunk by over 22% in the last 30 years.

A number of platypuses near urban areas have died as a result of entanglement in plastic or rubber loops, cable-ties, plastic bracelets, hair bands and discarded fishing tackle. Illegal nets can also cause drownings.

Their status was listed as 'Near Threatened' in 2016 but there are fears that there have been further undocumented declines in numbers since then.

Currently researchers are attempting to identify platypus numbers and genetic resilience in the Midcoast and other areas. Neighbouring land-owners can become involved in assisting this vital work through the Midcoast River Revival Project (search River Revival on MidCoast Council website or contact Alisha Madsen catchment officer at our-manningriver@midcoast.nsw.gov.au 0436298486).

Kym Kilpatrick
FAWNA member



FAWNA
FOR AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE NEEDING AID

2BOB'S ENVIROFAIR AND MULTICULTURAL FESTIVAL IS BACK!

2BOB Radio is proud to confirm that the Taree Envirofair and Multicultural Festival will be held on Saturday June 11 and organisers promise this year's event will be as bright and entertaining as ever.

Gates will open at 9am and finish at 4.30pm - with a gold coin donation requested upon entry.

This will be the 29th Envirofair with the focus once again being on the 5R's - Reduce Reuse Recycle Renew and Repurpose.

This year, 2BOB has also added 'Recovery and Revival' as key themes due to the ongoing impacts of fire, floods, drought and Covid within our local communities over recent years. The multicultural aspect of the festival will include food and information stalls, as well as live world music.

There will also be the return of a variety of market and food stalls along with environmental and cultural Information stalls and displays, plus environmental speakers and kids activities, including a hands-on exhibit from Australian Wildlife Displays.

Expect too, fantastic entertainment on stage from local dance groups and musicians including:

Ian Papworth, California Dave, and Luca Saunders, along with world music ensemble Music of Joy. Musical entertainment will be headlined by Pam Hata, who will woo the crowd with wonderful songs celebrating her Maori heritage.

"Envirofair is a

great place to find new ideas, hear great local music and of course, enjoy tasty and nutritious food!" said Brendan Parker, Envirofair Coordinator.

"Combining Envirofair with a Multicultural Festival means we can reach a broader audience with multicultural displays and a line-up of world music and dance performances to entertain the wonderful folks of the Manning and beyond. Where else can you get this much entertainment for a gold coin?!"

"This fair is a celebration of the advances we are making in the right direction regarding the health and preservation of our environment. Recycling is now the norm, single use plastic bags are gone, renewable energy is everywhere, and now we are even seeing electric vehicles sold locally," said Brendan.

"Back when Envirofair

started in the 90's, environmental issues were still largely fringe concerns, but now this awareness is embedded into our everyday lives. The growing popularity of Envirofair over the years reflects that trend."

2BOB is also happy to announce that it has received a grant from The

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment - Crown Lands to help provide a Covid- safe Festival.

Interested stallholders are invited to contact 2BOB via their facebook page or email admin@2bobradio.org.au or ring 2Bob Radio station on 65526200.



RECLAIMING RESILIENCE AFTER PROLONGED UNCERTAINTY!

Resilience. A word we often hear circulating during times of crisis. But what does it mean? And how can we, as a community, practice and develop our resilience?

In simple terms, resilience reflects our capacity to bounce back after an event that has caused acute and mild physical, phyco-social?, or financial strain on communities, families, social systems, and individuals.

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction defines resilience as - the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards, to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform, and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions through risk management.

Put simply, it is tricky to predict how we will react in response to life threatening events; whether it be a flood, a bushfire, global financial collapse or indeed a pandemic, but there are ways we can plan and prepare for resilience.

STAY INFORMED AND STAY PREPARED

We know the daily news can be heavy on the heart; With war in Eastern Europe, geo-political unrest, the Northern Rivers under water, the looming climate crisis, (and the actions of government) can leave us feeling helpless and afraid for our future.

Despite the testing realities that we all face, we can engage with information in a helpful and productive way.

- Tune into your *local* radio when you make your morning cup of tea to catch up on top stories
- Diversify your source of local

news and be aware of what information you consume (especially the dreaded social media!)

- Be sure to take breaks from the TV or social media if it's making you angry or depressed.
- Read your insurance paperwork details in preparation for a potential claim.
- Listen to podcasts on topics that interest you.
- Familiarise your family with emergency contacts and the Bureau of Meteorology sources.
- Equip your household with emergency packs for possible evacuation.
- Make informed decisions and act for causes you believe in or things you want to change.
- Join Facebook groups that advocate the needs of your community.
- Limit exposure to risks by understanding the hazards around your home and in your local area.

PATIENCE AND COMPASSION FOR YOURSELF AND OTHER

It is tough to comprehend the enormity of life's challenges, particularly in the face of adversity. It is important not to rush the healing process and have compassion for your own experience and that of your friends and families. Research has shown that taking the time to articulate your emotions and write about how you are feeling, has proven to be a restorative means to recover from distressing, traumatic events. Before you can help

others, it helps to better understand yourself. When you work to deepen your relationship with your mind and body you can better serve your community.

- Seek the help you need through local mental health and financial support services
- Prioritise food, movement, sleep, and relaxation in your routine
- Get outside in the elements for a brisk walk or a casual stroll
- Take time for yourself, have a bath, read a book or learn to mediate
- Reflect on the practices that have aided you in the past during testing times
- Stimulate your mind beyond usual activities, learn to knit, or attempt the crossword

GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOURS AND YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

Research shows that loneliness has similar long-term effects as smoking the body and brain. When we are isolated (as we have been for last two years) we detach ourselves from reality and we can lose connection to the relationships that once served us. Humans are primarily tribal. Living alone can be ultra-challenging, it's encouraging to get out and about, to engage with those around you, and look for ways to brighten your day.

- Introduce yourself to your neighbours and find common ground
- Join local community groups and attend events
- Look to volunteer with the RFS, SES or the local Red

Cross if you have the capacity to assist

- Spark up conversations with people who inspire or appeal to you
- Experiment with vulnerability when building and developing relationships
- Raise topics of concern amongst friends and family whilst having an open mind
- Discuss collective strategies that may work to enable and empower others
- Help where and how you can, as happiness grows from helping others

From what the last two years surviving COVID 19 has taught us, it is evident we are all in this together. Each step you take towards strengthening your own capacity to respond to and recover from disasters is another step you can take for the greater good of your community and its resilience. We can choose to campaign for the changes we want to see in the world. By cultivating constructive dialogue and nourishing social connections we are already on the path to become well equipped to understand our sense of self, others, and the environment around us.

Laura Sheed

Masters in Disaster Resilience and Sustainable Development

For more information you can head to:

<https://www.undrr.org/>
<https://www.nsw.gov.au/resilience-nsw>
<https://www.redcross.org.au/>
<http://www.bom.gov.au/?ref=hdr>

JOANNE PEARCE

INDEPENDENT FOR LYNE

Meet Joanne Pearce, Aged 44, Independent for Lyne -

"Fighting for Integrity in Politics."

"I have a Certificate 3 in Aged Care and Disability, B.EnvSC, B.Health."

I am currently undertaking post-graduate studies in Disaster and Emergency Management. I'm a passionate volunteer, ex-reservist, and health worker.

I am fiercely independent, I am central, focused on policy not conformity. I have a plan to get to the core of our government issues with a focus on corruption and donation reform.

I'm passionate about service, people,

and community. I love being a member of the SES, and strongly believe in the Australian spirit.

My website jpforlyne.com has more detail on my plans for integrity, community consultation, aged care, disaster resilience, housing, carbon emission and more.

Feel free to contact me at joanne-pearce@jpforlyne.com



2BOB RADIO'S MEET THE CANDIDATES FOR LYNE

Manning Entertainment Centre 7pm Thursday May 12.

2BOB Radio extends an invitation to the community to their Meet the Candidates evening in the Manning Entertainment Centre at 7pm on Thursday May 12.

All the 8 nominating candidates for the Lyne electorate have been invited to participate.

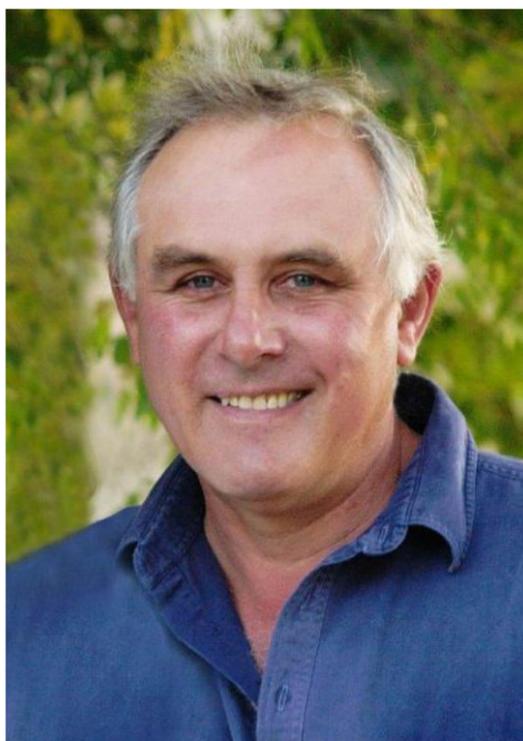
Admission is free and candidates will have an opportunity to address the audience with their reasons for seeking election, answer set questions put to them and then take questions from the audience.

2BOB will be recording the Meet the Candidates evening for later broadcast and streaming.

WE CAN BE FRIENDS OF THE USA WITHOUT BEING VASSALS

Bruce Haigh

A manifesto for a new incoming foreign minister - Some old Diplomats retire and never think about international relations, Australian foreign policy or their former profession of diplomacy. Most don't. Many remain friends and talk, at length, about international and domestic politics, events, disasters, war and climate change.



They find it hard to support most aspects of the Morrison government, particularly as it relates to the trashing of our international reputation, reflected at COP26, the collapse of our relationship with China, the hijacking of an independent defence policy by AUKUS and ASPI and the derision of DFAT by the LNP.

It is agreed amongst these sober minds that a new incoming minister for foreign affairs has some serious issues to address in the collapsed mess of what was once Australian foreign policy.

After much discussion and lengthy consideration, a manifesto for a new incoming foreign minister has been produced.

THE FIRST MAJOR ISSUE IS CLIMATE CHANGE

Australia needs to apologise to

the world for its greedy, selfish and thoughtless promotion of fossil fuel. It needs to engage with progressive countries and regional neighbours to urgently address the issue of emissions. It needs to work with Pacific Island nations to help ameliorate the effect of climate change on their land mass. This can start with open visas, allowing people to move between island states and Australia.

THE SECOND IS CHINA AND THE US

Xi Jinping is overseeing a more assertive China. He has trodden on toes in his quest to see China accorded inter-

national respect. America fears the growing power of China's economic success. At a time of global warming, it has embarked on a policy of 'containment', which involves confrontation rather than co-operation. American diplomacy stands a number of paces behind the American military machine. Threat, real and implied, and coercion are the stock in trade of American diplomacy and although their diplomats speak the language of conciliation, they are in lock step with the US military/industrial complex.

Americans in positions of power and influence speak a language peppered with military phraseology. America is a military nation. It has militarised the world. For America, guns are the solution to difficult problems, either through surrogates or directly. This acts out domestically and internationally.

China has pushed back. There are those that argue that Russia has done the same thing, although Putin actions make that contention perverse. The Chinese military infrastructure in the South China Sea can be seen as a response to the American fundamentalist Christian/military reaction to China with all of the racist undertones evident to anyone who stands back from the Murdoch/White House version of reality.

Australia, without a lot of thought, has embraced the language and attitudes of their dominant 'partner'. Their own incipient racism has been given comfort and encouragement, together with their low-grade militarism embodied in the poorly constructed ANZAC myth.

It was a short step for Morrison to respond to Trump and attempt to take a rise out of Xi Jinping over the origins of Covid. The undertaking demonstrated the stupidity of Morrison, an impression reinforced over the intervening years.

Believing the United States has its back, Australia ditched any pretence of conducting a diplomatic dialogue with China, instead it has been bellicose and bullying. There seems to be a belief that this approach to China will cause it to alter what Australia considers to be bad behaviour. Australia acts as if it had as much power and influence as China. Instead, it draws its bravado from a belief that its mentor approves and backs its behaviour.

In fact, the United States is using Australia. It has the LNP acting as a Punch and Judy show toward China. When Australia lost markets in China the US cynically and opportunistically picked them up. The US proposed AUKUS, an arrange-

ment to give them enhanced basing rights around Australia, particularly in the north. They got the French submarine deal ditched to clear the way for their own nuclear submarines to be based in Australia. They will put the north of Australia on a quasi-war footing. They are using Australia to militarily confront China.

There are two major issues. One is for a proper and independent Australian analysis of the threat posed by China and for Australia to improve the relationship with China. For that to happen there will have to be an admission of mistakes made, including by the Chinese, whose economic sanctions have been overkill. They have not had the desired effect; in fact, they have hardened the attitude toward China by conservative Australians who comprise over 50% of the adult population.

Nonetheless discrete negotiations need to begin almost as soon as the new ministry is sworn in.

The other major policy issue to be addressed is pushing back the United States. There is no need or reason for Australia to share American paranoia toward China. Australia is struggling to retain its sovereignty; it would help considerably if it were to be demonstrated and explained to the US that the alliance has its limits. We can be friends without being vassals. Our standing in the region, indeed in the world would be enhanced and improved were we to do so.

Bruce Haigh is a political commentator and retired diplomat.

This article first appeared in Pearls & Irritations.

WRITERS FOR CLIMATE ACTION!

“The Pen is Mightier Than The Sword”...

wrote novelist and playwright Edward Bulwer-Lytton in 1839.

And so our writers are adding their voices... thanks to the wonderful Kate Grenville who has rallied our writers to speak via writersforclimateaction.com. Consider who you vote for to best take climate action seriously.

Here Kate explains her feelings...

“I don’t know why some people seem to think voting is a great imposition. I love lining up and watching the person behind the table pick up the ruler and find my name. There’s a little warm glow of being one tiny thread in the great muddled ball of string that is the democratic process. Always, in the queue there’s a particular feeling: pleased, proud, everyone hugging to ourselves the little secret of how we’re going to vote.

When my kids were at primary school I loved helping to person the stall churning out the Democracy Sausages.

If you don’t count the doling-out of snags - sauce or mustard? - I’ve never been involved. But this time is different. A week ago I sent an email to six writer friends, to see if they’d be interested in joining a group I hastily named Writers for Climate Action. Five of the six said yes straight away. The sixth said she thought it was a good idea but it would be preaching to the converted, so she wouldn’t, but good luck.

Writers for Climate Action now has a website, a logo, a gmail ac-



AUTHOR KATE GRENVILLE

count and an impressive list of members, including Di Morrissey, Helen Garner, John Coetzee and Mem Fox. Every day more writers

join us. Every day readers see that writers whose work they like are prepared to put their names behind climate action.

This time is different because we’re running out of time. The last two years of unprecedented fires and floods are the first flicker of our future. Looking back, those floods and fires will seem like just the gentlest hints of what was to come.

Standing in that little cardboard booth with the pencil in our hands we’ve got a lot of urgent issues swirling in our minds. The cost of living, employment, refugees, taxes, corruption, defence, indigenous justice... They’re all important and they’ll all shape our future. But the writers who’ve come together believe that there’s one issue that underlies all the others: the need for a reliable climate. Without that, all those other issues - no matter how important they are - are only going to get much worse.

Writers for Climate Change isn’t pushing any particular candidate or party. We’re just hoping that people will do a bit of googling about the candidates in their area to find out which is the most likely to be part of real action on climate change. Most of them can see there are votes in climate action and are talking the talk. Let’s hope enough of them are prepared to walk the walk as we head into the next last-chance years.

Kate Grenville
Writersforclimateaction.com

COUNCIL ABANDONS COMMUNITY PLANNING!

Just in case you thought they weren't listening....

Two years after heralding a new era in community engagement and local planning Council's Director of Liveable Communities, Paul De Szell, has run up the white flag and authorised a Report to Council recommending that Council no longer engages with communities directly to develop community plans.

Part 1 of the Recommendation says -

"Council formally rescinds the Local Community Planning Framework, adopted at its Ordinary Meeting of 8 May 2019, and acknowledges and thanks the various communities for their various contributions to date."

The Recommendation was adopted by a majority of Councillors with only Crs Kathryn Bell and Kathryn Smith opposing. Cr Peter Epov was absent due to family commitments in Sydney.

This is a significant backflip given in 2019 the Council Report asserted:

"In developing our Community Strategic Plan, MidCoast 2030: Shared Vision, Shared Responsibility, we had a number of conversations with community members about their hopes, dreams and desires for the future of the MidCoast."

While the responses were as diverse as the communities, the common thread was the desire to retain the unique identities and qualities of

our towns and villages and for communities to be active participants in making this happen.

Community planning provides local communities with the opportunity to come together and collectively plan for their future, developing a plan that can then guide the delivery of Council services, activities and projects within individual communities."

Sounds good to us. However it went on -

"Local community plans also set in place the foundation for creating long lasting change in communities by mobilising community champions to lead community projects."

SURPRISE SURPRISE

Only now council has discovered the actual amount of work and cost involved with "195 localities across the MidCoast, consisting of 58 regional centres, towns and villages." This was not anticipated in 2018/19?

When the "Local Community Planning Framework" was conceived significant resources were committed to its development and the implementation of the program.

The Report also contains a rather staggering admission:

"Since the establishment of the framework three local community plans have been started, with only one completed."

So what was being done by the Council Administration during two

years of Covid lockdown?

Several insiders have suggested that the real problem was Council's inability and opposition to making meaningful commitments that would deliver tangible outcomes for Community Plans. Such as -

"The challenges include the ability for the plan to achieve broad representation and to establish strategic aims and objectives, rather than develop a wish list for Council delivery."

This failure will be viewed as the Council is in trouble and unable to make commitments and to deliver on promises. It also will be seen as a failure in public and planning policy.

The most fundamental requirement of any government has to be their capacity to plan on behalf of the people. We have Council Plans which feed into Regional Plans then feed into State Plans and eventually to National Plans. But our Council has now eliminated the first and perhaps most crucial step of the process.

In an area as large and diverse

as MidCoast Council covering over 10,000 square kilometres, communities need local plans to document local issues, which should be acknowledged and documented by the Council so people can at least have some hope that maybe, someday, something might just get done.

Council is required by law to have a Community Strategic Plan (a CSP spanning 10 years) and a four year Delivery Program as well as an annual Operational Plan. Local Community Plans should be a key tool into feeding into all those plans.

BACK FLIP

And whilst this Council report speaks to public trust, this backflip will not do anything in strengthening public trust. Rather it may lead to more disillusionment and dissatisfaction.

Council's new strategy appears is to have large numbers of localised public meetings as evidenced by the number of recently announced 'community consultations'. Whilst it is constructive to have regular and frequent community engagement the reality is that public expectation will not change - ratepayers will still demand better and more reliable services.

Councillors need to be reminded that they are the people's representatives and they need to direct the Administration to ensure that 'our

Council' is a body that is principally established to be community focused and to deliver quality services to the community. (The council works for the people. Not the other way around.)

COUNCIL'S QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW STATEMENT (QBR)

MidCoast Council's next Quarterly Budget Review Statement will be a key financial indicator as to how well our Council has been performing and whether Council will complete the promised Operational Plan Agenda by 30 June 2022.

The tabling of Council's QBR Report is a statutory requirement mandated as a transparency and accountability measure. The QBR is to be made publicly available to so as to inform the community on Council's progress and to assist Councillors to have a clearer picture of Council's finances before they complete the 'Draft' Budget and present it for public exhibition.

Council's next meeting has now been scheduled for May 11, let's hope the Agenda for that meeting includes a QBR!

AND, WHERE IS COUNCIL'S 2022/23 'DRAFT' BUDGET?

Originally slated to be released in April, Council is yet to place the 2022/23 'Draft' Budget on public exhibition. The 'Draft' Budget is also usually accompanied by a string of other mandated documents such as the Four Year Delivery Program, the Annual Operational Plan, and an updated and accurate Long Term Financial Plan, none of which have seen the light of day as yet. Nor has Council published the Community Strategic Plan which is a ten year plan that should inform the Delivery Program and the Operational Plans.

The Council's next Budget needs to reflect and act on community concerns and fund issues that are relevant and meaningful to the public, ahead of expanding the administration any further.

We can no doubt expect that this next Budget will be another one of those 'business as usual' Budgets which we have experienced over the past 4 years of our amalgamated Council.

'Business as usual' is code for more of the same, and it's pretty clear that the community is fed up and has had more than enough of the same.

Council's infrastructure is failing and there appear to be no worthwhile solutions resolving the problem. The recent rain events have exposed and reinforced the state of our fragile infrastructure as well as our exposure to natural disasters and climatic events which no amount of cosmetic solutions will ameliorate.

Last year's floods as well as the

recent floods in Lismore and up the North Coast are a very clear warning that we need to be better prepared and Council has to be the catalyst.

Cr. Peter EPov leapt back into the fray saying "Our' Council's Budget needs to reflect and act on community concerns and fund matters that are relevant and meaningful.

This requires Council focusing spending funds raised from the rate-payers on projects and activities that are of real benefit to our community and not on administration.

Council needs to significantly increase expenditure on roads as well as on Climate Change Initiatives such as Adaptation and Mitigation. We also need to spend money on real economic development. The community expects this."

When MidCoast Council was formed and the great argument was that now we would have scale and capacity to deliver outcomes for the community and be financially viable - 'Fit for the Future'!

That assertion now seems to have gone down the gurgler. The Administration continues to grow fatter with expenditure on expanding staff numbers, administration costs and consultants' costs spiralling. The service delivery is no better (many would say much worse) and the community is drowning in potholes.

Many locals report that when speaking with Council Officers, they are consistently told there is no money for activities and projects, yet Council will raise over \$300 Million in revenue in 2022/23.

Four years ago the common statement to the State Government was "set us up for success and we won't need the begging bowl." Now it seems Council will still be begging bowl dependent with its survival at the mercy of State and Federal Grants.

So this next Budget will be a real test for our Councillors. They either work as a caucus, behind closed doors or they come out into the light

and let their voices be heard.

Hallelujah! Fingers crossed. Don't hold your breath.

ADDITIONAL SPECIAL RATE VARIATION FOR 2022-2023

At the 27 April MidCoast Council Meeting a motion was moved by Cr David West and Seconded by Deputy Mayor Alan Tickle, and supported by a majority of Councillors, to approve the Administration to apply for an increase on top of the previously determined Rate Peg increase of 0.9% made in 2021 by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

Council will now apply for a 2.25% increase to commence from the 1st July 2022, which would if approved, be permanently imbedded into the rates structure.

The opportunity for greedy Councils to increase rates comes after a significant protest by many Councils at the recent local government Conference after which the NSW Government caved in and allowed applications for increases.

RATES SLUG

So get ready to get slugged after July 1 and with the current economic situation there may be a further significant increase later in the year when IPART determines the Rate Peg for the 23/24 year.

Some of our Councillors should consider is Council providing value for the rate money we current pay and the significant economic circumstances facing our residents and businesses in this low socio economic region.

At a time of spiralling costs, inflation and rising interest rates Council could have done the decent thing and stuck to the original 0.9% increase as previously determined.

Perhaps what will frustrate people the most will be that when this increase is approved, as it most likely will be, we won't know where that additional money will be spent. If Council promised to spend this

money on fixing potholes or other tangible initiatives this would have been far more palatable.

Council's Mayor Pontin, blamed the situation on IPART and the system to determine the rate peg increases.

Perhaps the blame sits with the Councillors who approved the increase, and the community may have a different view?

LEASE OF TAREE COUNCIL CHAMBERS TO TAREE UNIVERSITIES CAMPUS LTD

Incredible as it may be, the elected Council of MidCoast Council (with the exception of Crs Bell and Epov) voted to lease the Taree Council Chambers to Taree Universities Campus Ltd for a period of 25 years for the princely sum of \$5 Million dollars.

It might sound okay and we don't begrudge the Universities Campus for the deal they managed to extract, but for the community this will be a significant net loss over the period.

The lease figure of \$5Million equates to \$200,000 per year. The building is situated in the most prominent position in Taree and is 3,190 sqm with 37 secure car parks. It is now leased at \$62.70 per square metre fixed for 25 years.

After 25 years this asset which now is a building that is at least 37 years old, with the earlier section over 50 years old. So it has a value which equates to the building plus the land. After 25 years, it is likely that the asset could deteriorate down to land value.

Great move MidCoast Council. (Unless a developer with very deep pockets starts from scratch and turns it into Barangaroo on the Manning.)

COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

MidCoast Council has recently announced a series of Community Consultations, so if you have an interest please attend and express your views.

MCC Community Consultation Meetings

DATE	DAY	MEETING TIME	TOWN	LOCATION ADDRESS
05.05.2022	Thursday	6-8pm	Gloucester	Senior Citizens Hall
10.05.2022	Tuesday	6-8pm	Hallidays Point	Kranky Goat
11.05.2022	Wednesday	6-8pm	Taree	Council Chambers
12.05.2022	Thursday	6-8pm	Tea Gardens	Baptist Church
17.05.2022	Tuesday	6-8pm	Forster	Club Forster
18.05.2022	Wednesday	6-8pm	Stroud	School of Arts
19.05.2022	Thursday	6-8pm	Tinonee	Memorial School of Arts
24.05.2022	Tuesday	6-8pm	Old Bar	Club Old Bar
26.05.2022	Thursday	6-8pm	Pacific Palms	Community Hall
31.05.2022	Tuesday	6-8pm	Coolongolook	Memorial Hall
01.06.2022	Wednesday	6-8pm	Harrington	Harrington Function Centre
02.06.2022	Thursday	6-8pm	Bulahdelah	School of Arts



Keeping Them Honest

Stephen Charles and Catherine Williams

Scribe Publications Rrp \$32.99

When you read that former Attorney-General Christian Porter described the views of the distinguished former Victorian Appeal Judge and QC, Stephen Charles, relating to the establishment of a national integrity commission as being 'kooky', 'absurd' and 'bizarre', you know that Charles must have hit a raw nerve and had something important to say. And say it he does in this book which former Australian Chief Justice Sir Gerard Brennan describes as 'disturbing.'

This book is certainly disturbing and when reading parts I found myself feeling some anger. Anger tinged with some sadness about the parlous state of public affairs in Australia, a state partly caused by the Coalition's failure to honour its election promise to establish an effective national integrity commission.

Since retiring as a judge Stephen Charles has become a board member of the Accountability Round Table and the Centre for Public Integrity. The website of the Accountability Round Table says:

The Accountability Round Table is dedicated to improving standards of accountability, transparency, ethical behaviour, and democratic practice in Commonwealth and State parliaments and governments across Australia.

It is concerned that, in recent years, honesty and integrity in government have been eroded while maladministration and misconduct in public office have noticeably increased.

Catherine Williams is the research director for the Centre for Public Integrity.

The book presents a strong and compelling case for a robust and effective national integrity commission. The book also exposes the shallowness of all the arguments against having such a body.

The book begins by pointing out that when serious rape allegations were made against Christian Porter, he refused to resign by suggesting that to do so would be contrary to the rule of law. In this he was strongly supported by Scott Morrison. However, as the authors' arguments develop the reader is left in no doubt about the hypocrisy of the position taken by Porter and Morrison on this and

other issues where they and others in their government use the rule of law argument as a convenient shield when it suits them but ignore it when it does not.

The book looks in some detail at several instances of behaviour by the Coalition Government which would have been able to be examined by a robust integrity commission. Just **some** of the issues discussed are Robodebt; Administrative Appeals Tribunal appointments; Sports Rorts and Carpark Rorts, and the granting of some government contracts.

The book also looks at the corroding influences on our democracy of political donations and the revolving door between politics and business.

The Coalition Government did produce some draft legislation for the establishment of an integrity

commission. The authors explain that the Government's proposed model was seriously flawed in that it would allow for corruption of law enforcement officers such as police and judges to be exposed but would not expose similar behaviour by politicians, their staff, and most public servants. The book comments:

The disqualifying problem with (the Government's proposal) is that the half intended to monitor the rest of the public sector (other than law enforcement) is so crippled by its constraints that it is, as senator Jacqui Lambie has said, a 'feather duster'. It would also function as a protective shield. Rather than being an anti-corruption agency, it hides and thus allows corruption.

The authors identify several other weaknesses with the Coalition's proposal so far as it relates to politicians

and most public servants such as the fact that:

In order for any inquiry there must be a suspicion of certain criminal offences.

A complaint cannot be made by a member of the public directly to the integrity commission.

There can be no public hearings.

The Commission cannot make any critical findings about anyone.

The book examines the New South Wales and Victorian integrity bodies and debunks the argument that they unfairly taint reputations, particularly by the holding of public inquiries. The hypocrisy of the Coalition's comments on this issue is exposed by its own legislative model which permits public hearings in relation to law enforcement officers. Apparently their reputations don't matter.

The authors suggest that Scott Morrison's attack on the NSW ICAC when it was investigating Gladys Berejiklian was completely out of order and unwarranted.

ISSUES OF CONCERN

Chapters 10, 11 and 12 deal with other significant issues of concern to our democracy such as weak federal political donations laws, lying by politicians during elections and other times, and blatant pork barrelling.

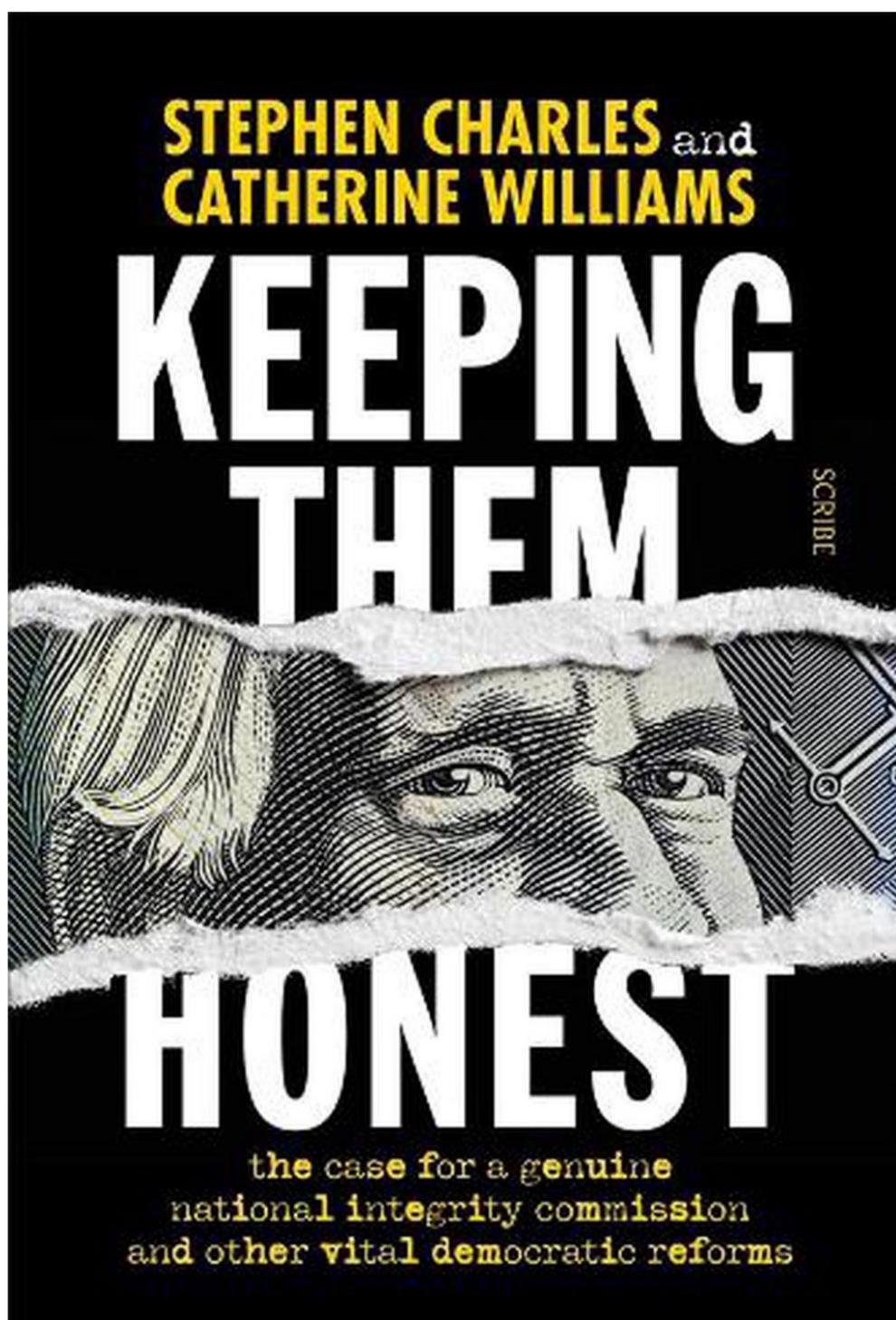
The book concludes with the following comment:

The community is sick and tired of politicians engaging in favour for favour; returning benefits and access to large donors; giving contracts to friends and allies; and using taxpayers' money as if it was their own. It has had enough of the evasions and secretive responses of this (the Morrison) government. The community is longing for integrity in government, and most want a strong national integrity commission.

This is a very timely book and deserves a wide readership. It should be required reading for all politicians and aspiring politicians. (And voters! Ed.)

John Watts

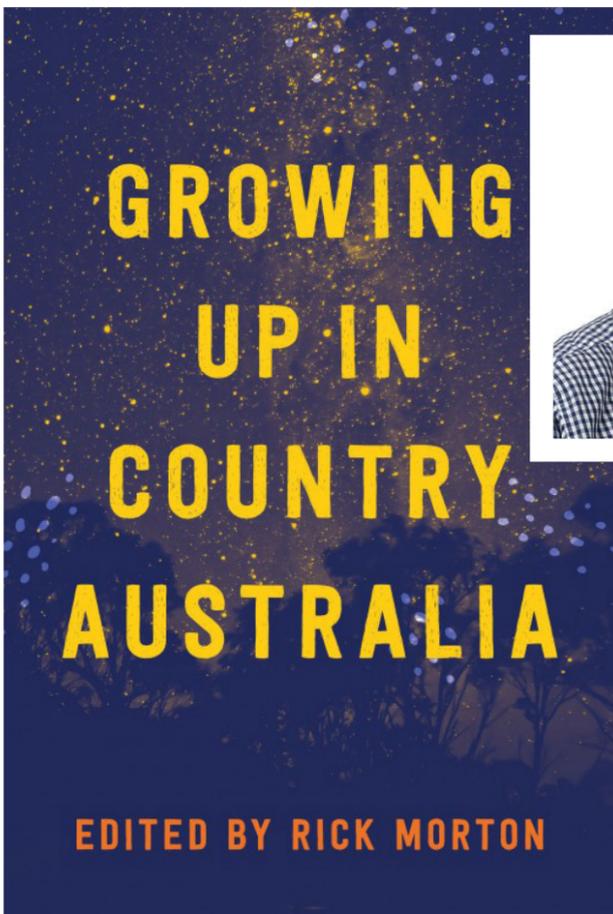
Retired Barrister, Gloucester resident, and author of 'The Town That Said NO to AGL. How Gloucester Was Saved from Coal Seam Gas'. John is also the president of the Gloucester Environment Group



Growing Up In Country Australia



Edited by Rick Morton
Black Inc. Rrp \$29.99



I grabbed “Growing Up In Country Australia” as soon as I saw Rick Morton. I didn’t notice the “Edited by”.

I loved his “100 Years of Dirt” and anything he writes, especially his columns in The Saturday Paper.

But I was not disappointed to find this collection of personal stories of memories and anecdotes of growing up in the country was a delight that triggered many memories of my own.

Contributors include Holden Sheppard, Laura Jean McKay, Annabel Crabb, Sami Shah, Lech Blaine, Tony Armstrong, Bridie Jabour, Jes Layton, Lily Chan, Jay Carmichael and many more.

Several stories mention or have the same theme as incidents on the school bus which brought back memories for me. There’s bush settings, country towns and farms, droughts and mice plagues, there’s deeply emmeshed roots, and newcomers who found themselves in an alien landscape. Nostalgia, nature, naughty and nice, these personal reflections are like reading a letter from a pal. (Remember letters?)

As well as bringing back memories of my own, it occurred to me you might have a memory or two to share! If so do send it along to me. (Address on back of the paper.)

DM.

Fascinating Fish!

Maitland fishers champion Nick Nancarrow visited Broughton Island through the week and returned with a couple of monsters in the bag.

Tossing large plastics wide of the island, Nick came face to face with a thumping 25kg cobia which refused to leave the water. Following a mighty battle, the fish which was initially thought to be a shark, was finally lifted into the boat.

Cobia are a fascinating pelagic fish in that they have many names including Crabeater, Black Kingfish and Sergeant Fish. Generally considered a tropical fish, Cobia, which can grow to an impressive two metres and weigh over 60kg, have been reported north of Jervis Bay, particularly around this time of the year.

Locally I have received reports of Cobia attacking baits and lures from Broughton south to Fingal Beach.

Considered a tenacious fighting fish, the Cobia also performs excellently in the kitchen or on the barbie.

I visited Tanilba Bay Public School through the week to address the students on the joys of reading and writing books. What a great school with a wonderful caring and committed staff! The kids were respectful, well-mannered and enthusiastic and made my visit a treat.

(What’s the secret for weaning kids off screens and back to books ? ed.)



Fishing writer, author and radio presenter John “Stinker” Clarke can be heard weekly, throughout NSW, on popular ABC Regional Radio fishing program “The Big Fish”. Check him out on www.stinker.com.au or send an email to editor@manningcommunitynews.com with your information and questions.



Antiques And Collectables

Collecting is a wonderful hobby that can bring you lifelong enjoyment and knowledge. I recommend it to everyone. Jenny and I have been collecting as a hobby for over forty years now. We have made many great finds, had wonderful collecting adventures and met many, many interesting people with great stories to tell.



A collection of vintage Pocket/folding knives

Iretired from my profession eight years ago and life has taken a new course. A friend (Dave) and I were both in the same boat. Retired, with spare time on our hands. We both had large collections and it was time to disperse. We started a shop in Wingham at 12 Isabella Street - Antiques & Old Wares, and we share the hours. Very retired gentlemen's hours! We're having fun, meeting lots of interesting people and still making the odd interesting buy.

It is sad to see a local icon leaving us. Phil Passau has owned and managed Clancy's Second Hand and Office Furniture in Taree, for nigh on forty years. He has been a fair, generous and successful local identity. We wish Phil and Helga a happy and healthy retirement. Clancy's will continue under the new ownership of Anna, Rob, Bonny and Mason. We wish very success to the family in their new endeavours.

Collecting vintage and antique pocket knives is a hobby enjoyed by many enthusiasts. Prices will vary from a few dollars at a garage sale to thousands for a rare early piece. One of the most important aspects in knowing what you should pay for a good vintage pocket knife is who the maker was.

We all remember our first folding knife or pocket knife, whether it was a Swiss Army multi-purpose monster, complete with toothpick and tweezers, or a slender single-blade antler-handled Case. But folding knives have been around for a lot longer than these companies.

The jack knife, a derivation of an antique knife invented by a Frenchman named Jacques de Liege, dates to the 16th century, while the Barlow, named for English cutler Obadiah Barlow, is from the late 17th. As for the peanut, this two-bladed knife, usually less than three inches long when closed, takes its name from its diminutive size.

Just about all knives are constructed from the same basic parts. There is the blade, of course—for folding knives with more than one blade, the largest is called the master blade. And the knife's decorative handle, or scale, is often bookended by bolsters made of a material strong enough to help support the pin that acts as a pivot point for the blade. Strictly speaking, jack knives are knives whose blades open from the same end. A Barlow is a type of jack knife whose handle widens at one end to give it a kind of teardrop shape, which makes it easy to grip. Scout knives,

sometimes called sportsman's knives, have blades that pivot open at either end. Indeed, these knives, exemplified by the red-handled contraptions made by Victorinox, are probably best known for blades that aren't blades at all—screw drivers, bottle openers, fish scalers, nail files, punches, and saws are just a few examples of the tools found on these knives.

Other collectible knife patterns include the straight-sided physician's knife, the whittler (which has a hump in its back to give the user something to grip), the thin pen or office knife, and the hunter (traditional versions of this design swell at the centre while modern versions have a carved-out top and a mechanism on the knife's back that locks the blade into position). Giving the user a safe way to unfold a blade is usually accomplished by creating a notch, or pull, close the blade's spine. Sometimes these pulls will be long, running from the blade's tang halfway to its point. Others are the size and shape of the end of a fingernail—depending on the design of the knife, some blades have pulls on both sides.

Then there are knives whose blades can be opened with one hand, such as those with a hole or thumb screw near the spine instead

of a pull. In fact, variations of these so-called one-arm knives have been around since the US Civil War, when folding knives that could be opened with only one hand were a sad necessity of that conflict.

For knife collectors, some of the most sought brands include Buck, Boker, Camillus, Case, Queen, Remington, and Schrade. There are many other brands and makers from all parts of the world.

Search out a collectors Guide to finding and Pricing pocket knives. Enjoy your search.

I hope that collecting brings you the enjoyment that I have experienced over forty odd years!

Legendary Australian cast iron maker John Furphy, yes, the name that brought us "Telling Furphys" had a great saying that he placed on many of his wares – "GOOD, BETTER, BEST - NEVER LET IT REST - TILL YOUR GOOD IS BETTER - AND YOUR BETTER, BEST." *Not a bad philosophy on life.*

If you have items that you are not sure of, I may be able to help with information, appraisals and/or sales. I love the history and stories of old and interesting treasures from the past. Phone Rex – 0427 880 546.

Take care and stay safe!



Why Autumn is the best time for planting

You may hear other gardeners talking about autumn being the best time for planting, but why is that the case?

Autumn – particularly mid-autumn - is a good time to plant for lots of reasons, but all are to do with creating a stress-free environment for the new plant to flourish and experience less transplant shock.

REASON 1: THE RIGHT TEMPERATURE.

As summer moves into autumn, the weather starts to cool, but the soil is still warm from all that summer heat - making it attractive for root growth. Ideally, the plant can grow its roots into the soil, anchoring itself and moving beyond the planting hole to seek water and nutrients.

In autumn, daylight hours are shorter, so plants experience less stress even if the day does get warm. In many areas, autumn also means more reliable rain, which again means less stress for a new planting.

Autumn is also a nicer time for the gardener to be out in the garden doing heavy work such as digging and soil preparation!

REASON 2: PLANT AVAILABILITY.

In autumn there is generally a lot of good quality plant stock available from nurseries, including shrubs, trees and seasonal annuals and vegetables. In addition, there are bare-rooted plants available such as roses and fruit trees. Bare-rooted plants are deciduous plants that are grown in the ground then lifted to sell with their roots protected but not planted into a pot.

Bulbs, too, can be planted right through autumn.

Give all new plantings the extra assistance of a seaweed tonic, such as Seasol, which also helps to encourage strong root development and increases tolerance to both hot and cold conditions.

REASON 3: BEAT WINTER DORMANCY.

If you plant in autumn, you're giving your plant time to establish before winter. When winter does arrive, the new plant will slow or stop its growth. If the winter is cold and frost occurs it may be



necessary to protect the new plant especially if it is not frost tolerant. If winter is very dry, it will be necessary to keep watering the new planting.

Come late winter and early spring when the days get warmer and longer and the soil too begins to warm up, new growth will occur both above and below the ground, signalling the need for fertiliser and increased watering. An autumn-planted shrub or tree should grow rapidly using those strong

new roots it established before winter.

Sure, many of these good planting conditions also exist in spring, but later in the year with summer on the horizon we are moving rapidly towards hotter conditions and longer days - making it more stressful for a new plant. Spring is still a good time to plant, but the plant will need more attention such as extra shade, shelter, and water.

In short- there's no better time than now to get out into the garden

and get growing! If you'd like more planting advice visit or give us a call at Wingham Nursery where we're more than happy to help with all your autumn garden needs.

Caitlin
Wingham Nursery & Florist
02 6553 4570

HAPPY ONE HUNDREDTH BETTY!

On May 19 my Mum Betty McKinnon turns 100!

She was an only child and grew up in Coogee, and some of the time at Glenbrook in the Blue Mountains and went to school in Coogee and Randwick.

She married Lt. Ian Mackinnon AIF in April 1942 and had two children, Robert and sister Lynne.

Mum was a very good driver, starting off in the 1950's when my dad made her change a wheel on the car before he would let her learn to drive. She managed a lifetime of driving without any penalties and only gave away her licence a couple of years ago. I might add the car was over 10 years old and only had 20,000 Kms on it.

She has been a very active sportswoman playing Tennis, Golf and many other sports, including winning a NSW championship for 10-pin bowling. She was also a very good musician and some of her skills passed on to me.

She has a talent to be very good at anything she puts her mind to and has been a prolific and

successful Artist for many years, having exhibited in London, Paris and New York.

After moving to Forster, she became the President of the Great Lakes art society and was instrumental in getting grants and successfully built the present building that the Art Society and the Bridge club currently occupy.

Mum was awarded the Centenary Medal in 2000 and the Commonwealth Recognition award for Senior Australians in 2001 for her efforts with the Art Society.

Even though she has slowed down a little in recent times, she is still very active. They even managed to put a new hip into her last year, at the time she was the oldest to have that operation.

My mother also enjoys social activities and travelling; we have done several long trips to



Southern NSW, Sydney, Brisbane and parts of Southern Queensland in recent times.

It's pretty great to be in your late 70's and still have your Mum. Love you Mum.

Robert McKinnon, Forster.

(From all of us at the MCN and readers too ... Happy 100th Betty!)



COUNCILLOR'S DAUGHTER WEDS

Recently, Councillor Peter Epov walked his daughter, Polly, down the aisle at St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney to wed Digital Marketing Specialist, Mr Drew Shardlow.

The service was performed in the stunning location of 'The Crypt' which is situated directly below the Cathedral. This was followed by a reception for over 160 family and friends at the Tea Room in the historic QVB Building.

Councillor Epov said:

"This was one of the proudest days of my life, and the challenge was to walk my beautiful daughter down that very long aisle without tripping over her elegant gown."



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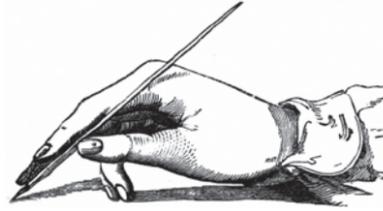
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Your Say...

Letters may be edited for space, offensive language or defamatory reasons.

Dear Editor,

I have lived in Tinonee for the last 15 years all of which have been in retirement.

At the start, I would go to Taree early to get any necessary supplies, transact business or visit service people.

This activity of mine ceased after a few weeks. I could not believe the traffic chaos around the start of the working day for most. Vehicles travelling from the south, backed up to the Purfleet roundabout and beyond.

The Masters roundabout has not made matters any better, some may argue, it has made the situation worse.

Move on 15 years and unfortunately the traffic jam is still woeful, if not worse.

The only redeeming feature that is apparent, is the peaceful nature of the majority of country folk who put up with this situation morning after morning.

How pathetic of our leaders in main roads and council, not to have come up with a solution to the problem in all this time, (and probably even longer).

Now a solution, may be easy or may be difficult, but here is one which I have mentioned to a couple of councillors over the years.

Turn off the right-hand turn arrow into Victoria Street and the lights to cross Commerce St (Wingham Rd) between 7 am and 9.30 am as well as 3.30 pm to 6 pm

Erect suitable signage

Build a U-Turn bay in front of the old Fruit Market, to enable cars that enter Victoria Street heading towards the bridge, during these

time, a way to turn around.

Advantages.

There are numerous roads for drivers to turn right up to High Street to enable organised dispersion of traffic into the Taree shopping and business district.

Traffic coming from south on Victoria Street have ample routes to avoid the lights at the bridge.

Cars that inadvertently end up in Victoria Street near Rivers can use the U-Turn to find an alternate route to Wingham Road.

Certainly, productivity would increase with commuters not in their cars for inordinate amounts of time more than they need to be.

Having cars not moving at a snail's pace or unnecessarily idling, would contribute our little bit to reducing carbon emissions and positively impacting climate change.

Over the years we have had intermittent changes to the way we drive, initiated through signage.

50 Kilometres per hour in designated built up areas.

40 KPH in the vicinity of school zones from 8 to 9.30 am and 2.30 to 4 pm.

No parking in designated areas for part of the day.

Various other rules have been accepted readily by the driving public.

It would not take long for people to become familiar with the proposed changes.

I think that short term disruptions to traffic would be inconsequential.

I believe that this proposal, is worthy of consideration.

**Lance Coffey
Tinonee**

Dear Editor,

I'll keep this short The Pacific stuff-up re the Solomon Islands, a national debt and deficit disaster, broken promises on integrity, and climate policy denial, delay and disinformation.

Just four reasons not to vote for the Nationals.

Send them out to pasture on their MP retirement fund.

I'm voting independent.

Harry Creamer,

Harry Creamer
Port Macquarie

COUNCIL ELECTIONS A PRECURSOR TO FEDERAL ELECTION?

Dear Editor
I have been an avid reader of your informative newspaper since the very first edition, and am pleased to see you have no qualms about printing the truth, especially with our council matters.

Prior to the last council election I was pleased to see so many Independent candidates, which is what was sorely needed in order to break up the destructive cabal of eight councillors,

who always seemed to do everything in their power to block Peter Epov at every turn.

After the votes were counted, at least one member of the cabal was not re elected, but then another apparent cabal of seven, or eight councillors was formed in order to block Epov and Bell at every turn.

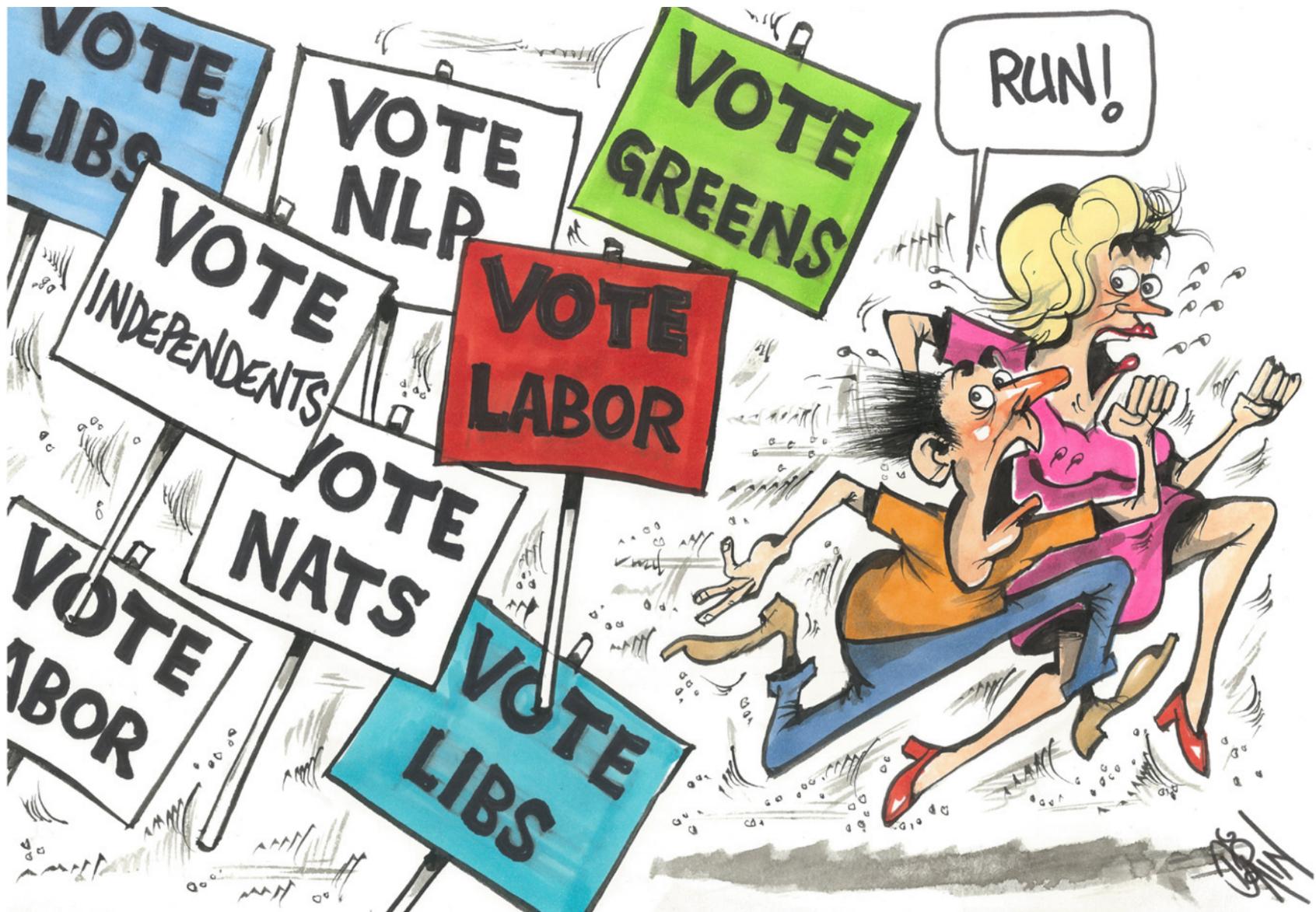
What a shame the preference system of voting is still in place, and what a shame several councillors stood un-

der the Liberal banner, which meant they had a good chance of being re elected simply because we live in an area which is controlled by the LNP, and with so many rusted on voters not knowing why they voted for these councillors, except that being Liberal, they must be good candidates.

I am very disappointed there are several so called independents who are not really independents, but the fact that councillors are the ones to

vote for Mayor and not the public. The fact that the Epov team clearly won the highest number of votes meant that the majority of voters were very happy to have this team elected to council, and I am sure most would have voted for Epov as Mayor. We need to have a popularly elected Mayor next time!

Gary Hayes,
 Taree



To keep this paper running, make a donation : BSB 032102 ACCT: 007242 – Thank you!

Publisher and Editor DI MORRISSEY

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