

The Manning Community News

DECEMBER 2023

SHARING COMMUNITY NEWS AND VIEWS

FREE

This paper is being published as a community service to provide readers with factual and independent coverage of news, people and events in our district.
If you have a story idea please contact us. PO BOX 7, WINGHAM NSW 2429 editor@manningcommunitynews.com

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- Link2Home: 1800 152 152
- 1800 RESPECT: 1800 737 732



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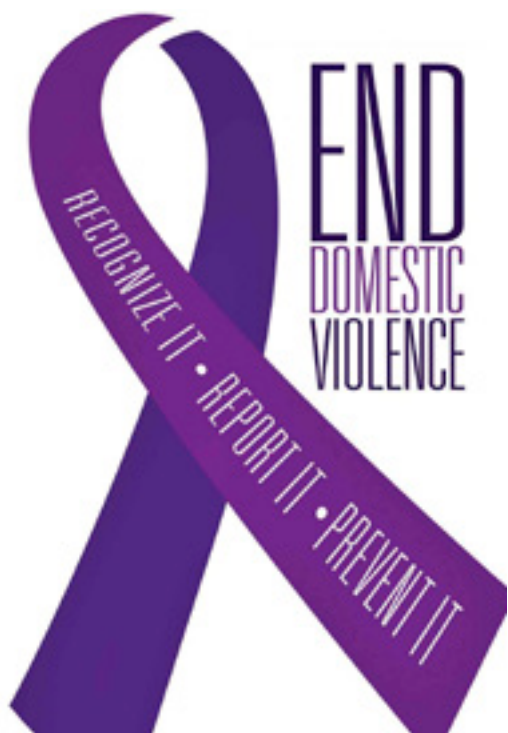
**LURING
BEES**

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: IT'S EVERYWHERE AND IT'S EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Domestic abuse and family violence is not a “women’s issue”, and nor is it a “men’s problem”. It will take a whole of community response to end domestic violence and abuse. The National Plan to End Gendered Violence in a Generation has ambitious aims for the safety of women and children in the next decade or two.



When we hear about six women killed in domestic violence homicides within ten days, one despairs that there is an actual solution in sight. For the amount of dollars invested over the past few decades, it's difficult to imagine bringing an end to domestic and family violence anytime soon. That is, unless we start doing things radically differently. To do the same thing over and over and expect a different result is our current approach and it's not working.

So what is going to work? Each year the world engages in the United Nations led campaign: 16 Days Against Gendered Violence from November 25th through December 10th. Across Australia there are marches, vigils, speeches, fundrais-

ers and awareness raising to engage everyone - young, old, men and women - to care about the scourge of domestic violence in our country. Sadly the same statistics will be repeated that lead us to despair and incredulity:

One in six women have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner

Almost a quarter of women will experience physical or sexual violence by a partner (23%) compared with 7.3% of men

In Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, women experience even higher rates, with 3 out of every 5 women experiencing sexual or physical violence.

1 in 4 women (27%) has experienced violence, emotional abuse

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A WISH FOR THE NEW YEAR



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or economic abuse by a cohabiting partner since the age of 15

A man kills a woman a week, on average, in relationship or domestic abuse.

HOW DO WE CHANGE THIS?

The number of men who murder women in intimate partner violence remains stubbornly high. And this doesn't count the other forms of violence experienced by women every day, namely coercive control. On July 1st, 2024 coercive control will become a criminal act across NSW. It will no longer be simply disrespectful to verbally and emotionally abuse a partner (usually a woman by a man, statistically speaking) but it will be a criminal act. To be clear, unlike physical or sexual assault, which is incident based, coercive control is a pattern of behaviour, when one person repeatedly hurts, scares, threatens, or isolates another person to control or dominate them. Coercive control occurs over time and can build, as the pattern may begin with intermittent behaviours and then escalate to comprehensive limitation of a person. There are many forms coercive control can take:

COERCIVE CONTROL

Emotional: manipulating another's emotions, deliberate confusion, gaslighting, and demeaning another's self worth and self concept

Sexual: coercive sex or using sex as a weapon with threats. It can also include reproductive abuse, pressuring for pregnancies or manipulating birth control

Economic: financial abuse which can include limiting access to accounts or funds, limiting access or information about joint assets or funds, issuing an "allowance" weekly, liquidating Superannuation, creating debts in joint names, controlling spending unilaterally, siphoning Centrelink payments to a non-joint account, prohibiting a partner to work/earn money.

Physical: threats to life, and bodily safety of them or children or family, abusing a partner physically just under the line of leaving a mark or blood so there is no evidence.

PSYCHOLOGICAL THREAT

- Psychologically threatening, pressuring or intimidating someone verbally or emotionally blackmailing them, and can include threatening to isolate them from friends and family.
- Digital: tracking a partner is so common now that many DV services report 9 out of 10 women experience a form of tracking or spying. Digital abuse may entail coercion to access accounts and emails, spying on emails, apps, communications,

locations and files, impersonating someone to access files and accounts, and using tracking software to keep track of locations and movements. Hardware also helps abusers to track someone, for example putting a location device like an Apple Tile in a pram, car, purse, nappy bag, child's toy or more.

Post-separation: many people mistakenly assume that once a woman has escaped from the home where she is being abused that she is free from his abuse, threats and terror. This is almost never the case as post separation abuse usually escalates as he becomes less in control and increasingly angry or vengeful, seeking to regain power and control. Post separation abuse can be verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, economic (ie withholding mortgage payments in both names, or withholding child support), or legal - filing multiple lawsuits to threaten and harass her, or threats to sue for defamation or custody in the future should she share her story. For every perpetrator there is a different version of abuse and post separation abuse. Leaving doesn't mean she's free; it's just the start of the second act of the abuse scenario.

"1 in 4 women (27%) has experienced violence, emotional abuse or economic abuse"

With so many types of abuse, without even starting to count murders, what is one to do? What can one person do?

HERE'S A START:

1. If you have younger children in your family, whether children, grandchildren, nephews, nieces, discuss directly with them what respectful relationships look, sound and feel like. It's important both boys and girls hear this from you to balance the influences of music, television and especially social media.
2. Support respectful relationships education in primary and secondary school by writing to your local school principal and expressing this. Education is an essential part of the solution to DV because when younger gener-

ations understand healthy communication, safe and respectful language, and empathetic, equal and respectful behaviours, they become cycle breakers and the end of domestic violence becomes more in reach.

3. Increase refuge/shelter capacity across NSW and an understanding in Family Court to loosen geographic restrictions if she is living in a prohibitively expensive area with low affordable housing, especially if he isn't paying child support by writing about this situation to your local MP. They will care: domestic violence has been named as a priority in state parliament.

4. Advocate to your local MP to extend government support to women and children on temporary visas who have fled domestic violence. Right now they have zero support. If you or a family member were living outside Australia and found to be in an abusive situation wouldn't you want to be able to turn somewhere for help? As a kind nation, it's the least we ought to do.

5. Donate to your local women's shelter or service. It's a tough time economically for many, and for women fleeing abuse it's really hard and many face homelessness.

6. Support the right for any woman across Australia to be able to choose when or if she leaves the house - the one that her abuser made unsafe. Did you know most women don't have this right to choose? Currently, the status quo in most places across the country and in NSW particularly, is that if a woman wants to leave domestic abuse and violence, she absolutely must flee her home and she is expected to leave and not demand he be moved out. This must change, for the best interests of the children and their stability in their schools and community, but also for fairness: she didn't cause the abuse and harm and the burden should not be placed on her or the children. The burden and accountability must absolutely be on the abuser and man who chose violence. Then, with that right in place, the police can exclude the abuser from the home and she can make informed, thoughtful decisions about where to go, and when, how to communicate that to her children, and keep safe with the support of a DV service (who work together with the police). This intermittent right is available in a few LGAs with a few local courts but if we make Staying Home and Leaving Violence an election issue,

women will be safer everywhere. Write to your local and federal MPs and ask them to support this right

6. 7. Call out disrespectful behaviour when you hear it and see it. The standard we walk past, laugh at, dismiss, and stay silent on is the standard we accept - and set for future generations. Being crude, rude, misogynistic, sexist, ageist and racist is not funny, cute, trendy or acceptable. Be an upstander not a bystander.

DOMESTIC ABUSE AFFECTS EVERYONE

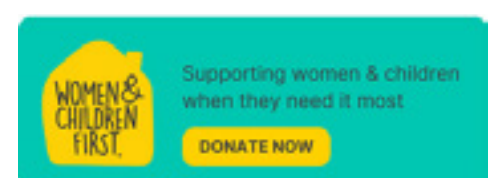
Domestic abuse affects everyone of every age. Women are murdered and abused over the age of 80 and under the age of 18 from every cultural and linguistic background; especially Indigenous women who are 37 times more likely than other women to end up in hospital.

If you or anyone you know needs support, help, or advice, reach out. There are so many people in services, trained and waiting for your call. You just have to pick up the phone. A healthier relationship and a happier life starts with a phone call or a caring conversation with a friend.



Dr Gabrielle Morrissey
CEO Women and Children First.
WACF.org.au (www.wacf.org.au)

(Disclaimer - Dr Morrissey is the daughter of Editor/Publisher.)



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NOT ANOTHER QUARRY!

Quarry Development Is Out Of Control Several community groups in the MidCoast and Port Stephens are very concerned about the recent proliferation of hard rock quarries in their area.

One such group is The Voice of Wallalong and Woodville (VOWW), a community group based in the rural hinterland area of Port Stephens. VOWW has joined with other groups who are sharing their concerns with the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE).

President of VOWW, Margaret Ritchie comments that:

“VOWW’s objection to the Karuah South Quarry, reflects the same issues that community objectors surrounding the proposed quarry have raised, and highlights the damaging footprint which quarry developments leave on the environment, roads, traffic generation and congestion, our communities and lifestyles.

SHE ADDS:

“VOWW is well versed about the significant impacts that quarrying has on residents near large quarry projects. The impacts of noise, dust, night-time operations, blasting and vibrations, haulage truck movements, gravel spilled onto roads breaking windscreens, and the loss of amenity and character of the area. This has been well documented and reported to DPE and the IPC (Independent Planning Commission) regarding the Hanson Brandy Hill Quarry at Seaham and Daracon’s Martins Creek Quarry at Paterson.

ABROGATE RESPONSIBILITY

It near impossible to have these concerns taken seriously with consultants using ‘government guidelines’ to abrogate any responsibility for the proponent.

Residents objecting to the Karuah South Quarry already have experiences from other surrounding quarries. It is disturbing to see that the Social Impact Assessment for the Karuah South Quarry has all but ignored the cumulative impact that the existing quarries have on residents.

Some residents are experiencing extreme mental stress and depression which is reflected in public meetings, but has not been addressed in the Karuah South Quarry’s Social Impact Assessment. Their physical health from the impact of dust and noise is simply being ignored by the proponent No wonder people have come to the conclusion that no one is listening to them, and believe their lives don’t matter, when they see consultant’s reports trivialise the problems that people currently face from existing quarry operations.”



The submission made by VOWW, objecting to the Karuah South quarry proposal included:

1. Cumulative impacts of multiple quarries to the residents, their health and the character and ambience of the area.
2. Cumulative impacts of quarry haulage traffic on all road users in the vicinity of the quarry land and the wider community using the Pacific Highway.
3. The lack of safety measures to ensure that quarry product is not spilt or tracked onto the road system with the risk of broken windscreens etc. to other road users.

4. The lack of concern for the environmental issues.

VOWW maintains that safety issues for proposed quarry haulage routes have not been adequately assessed. The Branch Lane is used by quarry trucks to access Booral Rd and Bucketts Way. It is unsealed, narrow and has tight corners, creating a danger for local traffic. And with the majority of trucks using the Pacific Highway, it is concerning to see the amount of gravel that is spilled over several kilometres, creating a hazard for other vehicles.

ling done on the pollution from the road haulage on the environment and the population at large as well as affecting climate change targets.

EXTREMELY LARGE QUARRIES

Community groups are vitally concerned about the proliferation of quarries in the Port Stephens and Mid Coast Council region - Deep Creek quarry at Limeburners Creek, another Red Rock quarry near the existing Karuah Quarry, Stone Ridge Quarry at Wallaroo State Forest and Eagleton Quarry. Hillview Quarry at Booral and Boral Quarry at Balickera are both preparing an EIS. These extremely large quarries, with a lifespan of over 30 years, all destroy natural vegetation, have impacts on rural and large lot residential properties and are likely to destroy the character and ambience of the area north of Raymond Terrace to Karuah.

THE COMMUNITY IS ALARMED SAYS MARGARETE:

“It cannot be denied that eight, either expanding or potential new quarries, will have a significant cumulative impact from blasting, vibration, noise, light, dust, heavy haulage truck movements and loss of amenity and character of the whole area.”

There is a strong community push to demand much better safeguards and standards before any more quarries are approved in our region. It is time that the authorities started to listen and respond to community concern and anger.

For more information on quarry development issues, go to the Hunter Community Environment Centre’s web page link www.hcec.org.au/stone-ridge-quarry

Megan Benson,
Gloucester Environment Group

VOWW and other community organisations have highlighted in their submissions to the DPE that the additional cumulative impacts of all quarry truck traffic must be taken into consideration when approving new quarries.

Margarete points out that:

“With hundreds of trucks a day to-ing and fro-ing there are dangers for all road users associated with such large numbers of heavily laden vehicles, and that includes those residents from the Manning area that travel frequently to Port Stephens or Newcastle and on to the M1. Of great concern is the fact that there has been no model-

COSY HOMES AROUND WINGHAM GOLF COURSE FOR SENIORS?

NO WAY SAYS MIDCOAST COUNCIL

Once again Wingham Golf Club has been knocked back in their effort to have land on their boundary rezoned so they can develop affordable housing for over 50s looking to downsize

The club has been asking MidCoast Council since 2019 and the answer has always been no. The land is currently zoned as farmland and the club wants it rezoned as residential.

Wingham Golf Club member Shane Greenaway says that when Greens Councillor Dheera Smith was asked why the rejection when there is such a need for houses to rent or buy in the area, she told him "they will be too close together."

Shane responded that the idea for retirement villas is to build them in a village setting, not space them out like the current ruling which says there should only be one house per block.

Retirement villas around golf courses in the USA are highly desirable ranging from modest to mansions

IT'S A LEGACY FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

The proposed housing site is on land the club does not use and is adjacent to existing housing on Country Club Drive, in Wingham.

As Shane pointed out, "We are hoping to encourage older people living in big homes to downsize and leave their houses for younger people and families who have no chance of obtaining homes in Wingham."

The current cost to buy land on the outskirts of the town is around \$300,000 and to build a house is a further cost of around



Wingham Golf Course

\$500,000. That is an unfair amount to expect younger people to take on board. Reasonable rentals are also extremely difficult in Wingham in the current climate."

In frustration the club has turned to the Nationals State Member Tanya Thompson who has sent it on to Hon. Paul Scully MP Minister for Housing and Public Spaces in the Minns NSW government. They are waiting for his reply.

HOMES FOR SENIORS

As Shane Greenaway told the Council, this is exactly what the Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has been saying all year - we need more housing because of the lack of affordable housing.

"Our project will release more housing and create more supply because it is specifically aimed at senior residents," said Shane Greenaway.



One of the reasons that MidCoast Council gives for not rezoning the land is that Wingham already has enough available land for traditional housing.

"But this is not normal housing," says Shane. "Our scheme is releasing existing houses and allowing senior residents to stay in Wingham and move into affordable local housing accommodation."

In a letter from Regional Planning dated 2021, MCC said the MidCoast Housing Strategy found that the population growth in Wingham has been limited during 2011 to 2016.

However, local residents maintain this does not take into account the recent increases in housing prices forced up by the steady influx of city people looking to buy cheaper homes in regional towns, particularly during and after the pandemic.

One resident lucky to buy a small 2- bedroom house for under \$400,000 several years ago says she has been tracking prices since then and her house would now sell today for \$460,000 if it should come onto the market.

Council have also given alternative suggestions of vacant land they would rezone on Wingham Road and Murray Road/Skyline Drive which Shane Greenaway says the board does not agree with, including the Council's suggestion that the Club development may be too close to the Wingham abattoir.

"It is time Council rezoned the land. All we plan to do is construct attractive low cost prefabricated manufactured housing which is sorely needed right now in Wingham," says Shane.

This would indeed surely benefit the community as well as the Wingham Golf Club.

HELLO HARRINGTON!

What's Happening in Harrington...? Amid ongoing gossip, rumours and worries over development in Beach Street Harrington, we went to the architect, Tone Wheeler and asked what is planned.



Plans for 3-5 Beach Street Harrington

If you have been in Harrington or on your way to Crowdy Head recently you will have seen that the commercial heart of Harrington is in a poor state. One shop was destroyed by a falling Norfolk Pine, another is uninhabitable, and the shops that are there sometimes struggle to find staff. Harrington desperately needs renewal.

Part of the erosion of the original town has been caused by a shift of population and some commercial activity out of town to Harrington Waters, and partly by the growth of short-term rentals that have raised rents such that many workers can't afford to live in town close to work.

Mid Coast Council recognised that the centre of town needed revitalisation and proposed a rezoning to increase the height and density along Beach Street. The locals objected to the proposal as being too much and too long, and it lapsed. More recently Council has signaled its concern at the lack of reasonably priced accommodation.

PHILANTHROPIST OFFER

Two new development proposals before Mid Coast Council are intended to address the situation, organised by a former local who was dismayed at what has happened over the last few years. Barry Lambert, who grew up on the Manning River at Bootawa near Tinonee, embarked on a very successful career, firstly in finance advisory and more recently in pharmaceutical investments. He is now a significant philanthropist.

Lambert purchased three properties, which are two separate sites, in

the main block of Beach Street and committed to improving the centre of town. He commissioned designs from enviro studio, a Sydney architectural practice, to provide new retail shops, office spaces, medical consulting suites for doctors and dentists and a variety of accommodation that includes 'key-worker studios' in one building and modest apartments in the other. He intends that none of the housing will ever be used for short-term rentals. He wants affordable accommodation for local workers.

FOUR STORIES KNOCKED BACK

The original submission made to Council in 2022 was for a four-story building with the upper levels set back from the street. These were intended to meet the original proposals from Council, but as they were not in the current plans, Council rejected the designs. A new design, only two-stories, with less amenities and housing, has been prepared and submitted to Council.

The proposal at 3-5 Beach Street has up to six shops on the ground floor and offices and/or medical suites on the level 2, all accessible from basement car parking. A generous setback on the ground level of Beach Street provides outdoor space for café tables, and better pedestrian circulation. Level 2 on the other side of the project facing Hedges Street has 12 key-worker studios, with separate lift access from their own basement parking.

The basement has all-weather car and motor-bike parking for residents and customers behind a secure

roller door, with direct lift and stair access to upper levels. The basement parking will alleviate on-street parking issues, including for residents.

Separating the building into two forms for commercial and housing creates a landscaped courtyard as a 'sky-garden' as a private recreation space for use by the tenants. The form of the studios is similar in scale and design to surrounding houses, using lightweight claddings (not brick or concrete) with the very familiar skillion roofs.

ACCOMMODATION FOR WORKERS

The proposal at 13 Beach Street (discussed with Council but not formerly submitted) has shops and parking at the ground level, and four small apartments on level 2, some with balconies facing Beach Street and others facing Hedges Street. There is short-term customer parking and loading areas off Hedges Street. All the housing in both schemes is intended to be retained by Barry Lambert's Trust, so that it will always be available for long term rental.



Plans for 13 Beach Street Harrington

Both projects are set back from the front and back streets to provide weather protection and shade for outdoor café areas, as well as reducing the visual scale of the building seen from the street. A 'front to back' arcade in 3-5 Beach Street will allow customers and residents to freely circulate and the building to be more usable for indoor-outdoor activities.

All of the building on level 2 is set back from the street boundaries to reduce the visual scale of the building from the street, and the balconies on both street frontages on both projects will provide outdoor spaces and reduce the visual scale. Both

projects will have accessible public toilets, located in the centre, together with the required service rooms, and vented garbage-storage areas.

SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION

The projects will use best practice in sustainability, in use and construction, in two ways. The first is for all the housing to be built from highly insulated prefabricated construction, a way of improving quality, reducing materials, and reducing waste by promoting re-use and recycling. All the studio units and apartments will be manufactured off-site using cross-laminated timber and installed as completed dwellings into the building.

The second sustainable approach is to maximise the building's independence in energy and water, with the entire roofed areas of both schemes covered in solar photo-voltaic panels, and the maximum collection of rainwater stored for re-use in the buildings.

The buildings have design elements representing some of the Manning Valley's history. On the external east wall, some First Nations history is represented by custom castings of Aboriginal art/motifs designed in conjunction with local indigenous artists. (The design shown on the drawings is for illustration only).

The history of the timber industry is represented by the oversized (300 x 300mm) timber posts on the verandas of L2 on both street frontages. The posts are "rough-hewn" (like the flitches in a timber mill). The success of various Manning residents (such as business leaders, academics, sports people) will be commemorated in plaques along the arcade wall.

MAKE HARRINGTON A HAPPENING PLACE

This proposal will provide new, vibrant retail and service opportunities for Harrington, Crowdy Head, nearby villages and all visitors. The housing will only ever be affordable housing with long term rentals – never sales or holiday rentals.

The projects will go a long way to the revitalisation of the Harrington town centre.

Tone Wheeler

WHAT'S GOOD ABOUT GROWING OLD?

Is it a time to think and reexamine your life? Volunteer to work a day or two for a charity? Join a book club, sign up to course at University of the 3rd Age, pursue a sport, join a gym or spend your days gardening?



Otherwise, there's nothing much else, unless you are in reasonable health. What is surely obvious to us all, aging can't be avoided.

Provided you have a bunch of aches and pains you can handle that do not stop you from going about life with a cheerful face, that is probably the best you can expect as the years tick on.

Some people will swear it's a dreadful time, others feel it is a chance to make changes, while others feel relaxed without the need to worry about anything except the ongoing health of the economy and their superannuation.

Whatever the state you find yourself in as an older person, rich or poor, you need to keep busy and socialize widely, for scientists claim it is the best way to avoid losing your mind, better even than crosswords.

Otherwise, you can't escape the inevitable no matter how many vitamins you consume and follow faithfully healthy eating programs that promise you loads of youthful vitality.

The truth is sudden health issues can crop up. Life is tricky like that. It trips you up. That's why lining up help now makes sense, just in case your luck runs out and you need ongoing support.

Any time over 65 is a good time to apply for a My Aged Care number allotted by the Federal Government. You then receive an assessment number of where you are at in health terms and what financial level of care you'll receive.

Just be aware that getting a number and assessment from My Aged Care does not happen quickly. It takes time as most things do in our society when the government is involved.

Once acknowledged, citizens on a full or part pension are offered by My Aged Care a range of private service providers. These are organizations that have been registered to handle Federal government funds.

SUBSTANTIAL FEE

Private service providers charge a standard fee each year to handle your care needs and this is paid from the money given to you according to your accessed level.

You can delay making a choice at the time of registering and come back later when you are ready to seek help. However, don't leave it too long before appointing a registered private service provider in your area so as to unlock the finance you need from one of the four levels of Federal government support.

The levels of finance start at one which is where every new applicant begins. It then progresses to the top level which is level four and this is hard to get unless you are assessed as being in serious need immediately.

You can ask for an extension if you can't decide on a private service provider. If there are none locally, then apply for a further extension. Don't leave it in the hard basket because your level will be withdrawn and you will have to apply all over again.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU

What My Aged Care don't tell those of us on part pensions because of an annuity, or large superannuation or substantial investments is that you are automatically moved onto Commonwealth Home Care on registration. This does not carry an annual fee, it means you must ring and request a referral each time you need extra home care.

The services you can choose for home care are wide ranging and include daily visits from carers to help with showering and personal care, house cleaning, meal preparation, shopping expeditions, trips by volunteer drivers to doctors, even mowing and dog walking in some cases.

If you are wealthy enough to pay for your own help and 24-hour nursing when you need it, then skip this government financial support, but still register with My Aged Care to be on the safe side. Now you have the insurance of knowing you can contact My Aged Care whenever you need help.

If independent living is now too difficult, it is probably time to investigate moving to an assisted living residential. These used to be called old aged homes, but it is obviously too jarring a name for baby boomers who are now reaching the older age bracket.

Our government's policy in recent years is to keep us at home as long as possible to take the pressure of the hospitals and aged care facilities. They reason this works as long as we are able to get around

and with outside help look after ourselves and as much as possible care for our husbands/wives or partners.

This also applies to those with disabilities who live at home with a permanent carer, or in a home with several other disabled people sharing care and nursing services.

To make the My Aged Care policy work smoothly there is also what is called "residential respite for seniors" which is worth checking out if your family is unable to visit often and your live-in carer needs a break for a week or two every now and again.

You also need to plan this ahead of time, especially as space at these residential facilities is limited. What's important is finding somewhere that suits you and where you'll be happy to return for short periods when needed.

Your doctor can suggest a facility near you, or you can ask My Aged Care if subsidized residential respite care is open to you according to your current financial assessment level.

HELPING HAND

This may all sound bureaucratic. Well, it is when getting established. Once you have navigated these obstacles it becomes an automatic helping hand and let's face it, we can't always rely on our busy family members who may have work and family commitments themselves. We may even have outlived our friends and friendly neighbours we used to be able to call upon.

It's all in the mix of getting older and doing it as gracefully and as self-sufficiently as possible.

Sherry stumm

For further information about My Aged Care –

email: health@nationalmailing.com.au

Tel: 02 62691025

Or Contact: 1800 200 422 (Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm. Saturday 10am to 2pm.)

Or myagedcare.gov.au/assessment/applyonline

WHEN I'M SIXTY-FOUR!

Some activities for Longer Living Ageing can come as a surprise, even admitting it to one-self, because mostly that time in life just creeps up on us. In 1900 the life expectancy in Europe was 42.7 years. Now it's 80.67. That makes for an awful lot of us.

A familiar scene in emergency departments is injury from falls in the elderly. These can come from standing on a chair to change a lightbulb or toppling off a ladder to clean the gutters, reaching sideways to get that last leaf. A younger person is more likely to bounce back, but this sort of accident in the elderly is sad. Mostly it's preventable and there are often long-term consequences for continued good health.

The medical system is good at dealing with emergencies and repairs but for maintenance of body and mind, elders need to look further afield.

So, how can we stay not only alive and intact, but also feel well?

A palliative care centre in Malawi that I once visited has as its motto, 'Add Life to Days, not just Days to Life'. Maybe this idea from the world's poorest country could provide a lesson. A curious side-issue for us in the developed world is whether our prolonged lives are even affordable.

For the new elders, the Baby Boomers, now looking back, age 64 was seen as old and unappealing in the heyday of the Beatles, 'Many years from now'. We have been a lucky lot, born in droves after the Second World War and into an era of increasing prosperity, prolonged peacetime, social change and personal confusion.

Could we have even imagined that the time they sang about would ever come to pass, for us, the forever young?

*"Will you still love me,
Will you still need me?
When I'm sixty-four?"*

The vantage point of sixty-four is a good place to change the story. It could be considered the youth of old age.

Dr Mary, a Scottish friend, is very sharp and fit in her late-60's. She sails and takes long walks but in a surprising throwaway, she commented, 'Once past child-bearing age, nature has finished with you. You've done your bit'.

A flinty lot, the Scots, with their matter of fact logic, but if that's right, then why is Dr Mary so chipper now

and likely to remain so for some time?

Today, one in three people are defined as inactive. Everybody knows walking is healthy, better with some hills or steps but not enough for shoulders and neck. The idea of repetitive exercise in a sweaty gym is irksome to many people who as a result, don't do anything. Dr Chris Ingall, paediatrician and writer, at a Healthspeak writer's lunch remarked, 'Look how the children play, always doing something different'.

Let me paint you a picture. Here is the scene for a senior's workout at the Sydney University Gym. The teacher, called Sparrow, is an 85-year-old ex-Wallaby. Most of his students are retired academics, many of whom started his circuit training all hunched and seized up. Done to music, one minute per action station, for an hour a week reversed that trend in a very few weeks. Sparrow always says, 'You can never do too many squats'. I attend whenever I visit Sydney and I told him of my setup for assisted squats at home. 'But are you doing them?' he insisted. 'Are you doing them?' Good point Sparrow.

Tai-chi master Rod said something similar. 'There is no good practice or bad practice - just practice or no practice'.

Tai-chi training is part of the Tao'ist system. Originally evolved as a martial art, it has, over centuries, been adapted for health to improve posture, balance and body awareness. It is now recommended by the Arthritis association.

Early morning travellers in China or Vietnam are surprised by the numbers of all age groups doing daily Tai-Chi in the park. Regular attendance in a group with a teacher is the basis for success.

So, the truth is, no matter how old, unfit or disabled the beginner, some activity is doable, at least until extreme old age.

The best thing about that stage of life? It doesn't last very long.

David Miller
Brunswick Heads
(Dr Miller is a retired GP)



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LOVE IS IN THE AIR

Loving strangers is easy to say, but harder to follow through as a rule. At the HOPE Shop and Community Centre in Taree they are trying in practical ways to give the word 'love' meaning.



There is always lots of activity at the One Life church and The Hope Shop in Muldoon St, Taree so feel free to join in

Enter their doors a stranger and chances are you will leave having been offered friendship in a caring presence. The acronym for HOPE stands for H=healing, o=opportunity, p=purpose and e=encouragement.

"We all agree times are tough," says Pastor John Parer who has been running the centre at the One Life Church for nine years. "At HOPE Shop we welcome everyone and try to help them with their difficult issues."

"We purposely work to integrate our activities with the community to make what we do useful," he points out. "We want everyone to visit and tell us how we can support them if they need a friendly face and a helping hand. We are a Christian group, however we try to help all sorts of people from all religious groups, including those who don't have a belief."

Paster John says they work to make sure they don't double up their charitable programs with others doing similar things, but rather introduce activities that will make life easier for those who are struggling. "A regular event we hold is a month-

ly barbeque in Bushlands in order to meet the community and offer food to any hungry children."

The centre's members also join forces alongside various communities attending events like monthly markets to meet people and offer practical assistance to the homeless and those who are newly released from prison.

The centre in Taree has a large nicely appointed auditorium where gatherings are held to sing and hold spiritual conversations. A local theatre group rehearses there weekly during the year in order to present twice annual theatre productions. Films are screened on the big screen behind the stage, while across the corridor there is a room with high tech equipment for training courses.

ARTS & CRAFTS

Singalongs accompanied by a band are held each Sunday night and during December annual Christmas carols are held in Old Bar Park.

Upstairs at the centre, a room is reserved for arts, crafts and indoor games, downstairs a second-hand clothing shop holds racks of good clothes, plus there's a multitude of kitchen appliances next door. These

two rooms are open to everyone three days a week.

A creche for young children is staffed by a carer along the corridor, so mums can leave their little ones safely if they want to join in an activity, or simply talk with friends over a cup of coffee in the lounge.

The coffee shop is currently run by volunteers but Paster John is hoping someone will come and take over the kitchen, hire staff and run the coffee shop. He says he would welcome an entrepreneur who wants to establish a business for themselves on the premises.

The centre is a big place composed of two stories which used to be the old squash courts and a viewing platform. It is spacious, nicely refurbished and well equipped to hold workshops and study groups. They are even planning further extensions to the upstairs area.

Pastor John says they already have people conducting regular workshops, wellbeing and physio classes, enterprise training, and educational groups. He welcomes anyone wanting to learn about their HOPE vision and give classes there that will help those wanting a chance to overcome their addictions or per-

sonal difficulties. He and his equally committed committee of elders say they offer love and listening and insist they will never miss a chance to speak enthusiastically about the healing power of love.

"It doesn't matter if you are feeling low, you have no money, you need nice clothes, a pat on the back or simply cheering up, this is where you find support," says Caesar Tobacco, one of the elders.

"If you arrive for the first time, we won't judge you, just shower you with love and hope you come back and join us to help build our community," he says.

"We enjoy singing together, inviting the holy spirit to enter into our lives and that of their audience," he explains. It is powerful and hard to ignore, even if you are not religious and your troubles seem unsurmountable."

The friendly enthusiasm and active determination of all the members who attend the community centre and One Life church make it a busy loving community space where they do seem to be trying to live their vision of HOPE.

Sherry Stumm

STRANGERS IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY

I can't think of another country in the world where the majority of the population seems to be as ignorant about its country, as Australians are. 72% of us live in our major cities and many live out their lives without venturing more than 100kms away from them.

Generally country people are in tune with the country, but when you look at how 'Europeans' have managed the Land of Oz for a bit over 200 years, you have to wonder.

We have had the largest extinction rate of our native fauna in that period, more than any other country, and much of our precious top-soil has migrated to New Zealand. Soil loss was caused initially by massive vegetation clearance and then over-stocking with clover-hoofed animals. Plus, the introduction of rabbits. You could forgive a lot of these early mistakes, putting it down to ignorance, but you can only blame ignorance for so long.

Early attempts at conservation were largely ridiculed by the mainstream. Australian farmers are renowned for their inventiveness, resilience, and perseverance against the odds. A well-travelled American tourist once said to me that if he 'was in the trenches' and could have a companion, it would be an Australian farmer. But some farmers are often slow learners when it comes to managing the land. It is only in recent years that initiatives like 'regenerative farming' are starting to be adopted. The die-hards continue on with the old methods and it will take generations for many of them to see the light. Australia has only 7% of the land that is considered arable (that can grow crops) and that is reducing with urbanisation and salinity. A scary thought!

Aboriginal people have been in this country for around 60,000 years, which is a fair bit of time to get the hang of things, yet Europeans have

largely ignored their accumulated knowledge, when it could have been hugely beneficial in many areas.

One thing that comes to mind is their mosaic 'whipstick'- the regular burning of country. Plus, the animals that traditionally kept the floors of our forests largely clear of accumulated litter, are mostly gone, increasing hugely the escalating bush-fire threat.

Among the millions of migrants to this country, are many who have embraced it with open arms and are far more "Australian" than many Anglo-Australians.

For years our school kids were taught mostly English history. Fortunately, that has changed, but it still has a long way to go. Most of our students would know very little or nothing about our deserts, for instance.

Decentralisation would help greatly to reverse this 'ignorance' but for that to happen, you need local industry to be established ... like Industrial Hemp! With over 2,000 uses, hemp has the potential to revitalise regional areas.

We are increasing migration when we have the biggest housing shortage in our history, with escalating interest rates pushing more into poverty and homelessness.

Right now you only have to look at the many powder kegs around the world to appreciate the benefits of this big island of ours. Our population needs to 'love it' and 'know it' with all its pros and cons.

Rex Ellis's Outback Books are available online.

Rex Ellis

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THIS WAS THE YEAR I DON'T WANT AGAIN

Are you as over Black Friday and Cyber Monday as I am? At a time when US culture is unravelling at home, US culture continues to spread world wide, and those two phoney non-holidays are becoming entrenched in Australia. That's just one of the social and political changes that mark 2023 as a year of two steps back and one step forward.

It is also the year of the hirsute heroes. Heroes, for some at least on the right of politics: Boris Johnson, Donald Trump, Geert Wilders, Javier Milei, Marine Le Pen and the anti-hirsute Peter Dutton. The right is resurgent in Europe and South America as well as the USA.

A new face of US political culture made a larger beach head here in 2023. It is divisive politics, us and them, no halfway house or compromise, winner take all, and the associated rise of the Christian right who seem to have made lying and deceiving for Christ and their own personal political ambitions into a sacrament.

These are trends whose importation we must fight with more vigour than the Varroa mite or fire ant eradication campaigns, as well as denying the use here of chaos as a political tactic.

One of the principles of revolutionary practice is to foment civil and political disorder, and in the chaos that follows, seek to seize power. These strategies are being deployed by a faction of the US Republican Party. It seems to seek a depleted government and to seize control of the US Congress by any means. In pursuing these goals, the faction has become a master of misinformation and disinformation and the use of right wing media channels to sow doubt and disorder and undermine

not just the government but also perceived enemies within in the Republican Party.

The recent Voice referendum saw the deployment of similar tactics in Australia, not just by the Dutton faction of the Liberal Party but by less publicly accountable groups like Advance (formerly Advance Australia).

These disruptive interventions are well facilitated by social media. If you were the master of an evil empire and you instructed your minions to develop a weapon that would bring down societies that valued freedom of speech and free enterprise, but whose education system placed little value on critical and analytical thinking (i.e. job ready education), then they would probably come up with a raft of social media platforms.

In 2023, further tentative steps were taken by the Australian government to attempt to take the wild west out of social media, requiring social media platforms to effectively police their own policies on acceptable content and usage, and empowering the Australian Communications and Media Authority to police the enforcement of the standards set by the platforms.

ADDICTION TO PROFIT

Here the government has come up against two lines of opposition: first, accusations of government censorship and then the social media platforms' addiction to profits.

This is going to be a very difficult issue to balance rights and responsibilities. Authoritarian government support community interests to the extent those interests serve the ruling elite. Democratic governments are expected to serve the interests of their citizens.

One of those interests is the free

flow of information, and some quality control, but not at the price of suppressing free speech, beyond that which serves some public interest like not provoking panic. It is a fine balance and the proposed Commonwealth legislation had been deferred to the new year for more consultation and drafting.

And there are contending ideas about what amounts to truth. The last decade has seen truth become a very contested matter and virtual reality tools allow the creation of the voices and images of people doing and saying things they did not do or say.

This year saw the launch of Artificial Intelligence (AI) programs on the general public. These programs are also known in quite Orwellian terms as 'generative pre-trained transformers' (GPT). Coupled with virtual reality programs, you have the makings of a world where nothing you see or hear in the media or on a screen can be relied on to be real, let alone truthful or responsible.

Some AI insiders see a great threat here. Last May 30, more than 350 top AI professionals including Sam Altman chief executive of OpenAI, creator of ChatGPT, and the chief executive of Google DeepMind, Demis Hassabis, and 37 of his co-workers, signed a one-sentence open letter to the public that aimed to put the risks of the rapidly developing technology for humankind. They said: **"Mitigating the risk of extinction from A.I. [sic] should be a global priority alongside other societal-scale risks such as pandemics and nuclear war."**

As with the first warnings of climate change, little has changed in the AI world, except Sam Altman was fired, then a week later, reap-

pointed to head Open AI. At least in 2023, the idea that climate change is no more that alarmist or self-interested scientific speculation has been dismissed by more and more governments and a precautionary policy approach is taking over.

The year started with just one hot war in progress, and looks like ending with two. One, the defence of Ukraine from the Russian invasion, scores fairly high on the justified scale, but the second, in Israel and Gaza and southern Lebanon, is the latest tragic episode in the conflict between two societies that embrace ideologies of distrust and hatred. Every death on either side germinated anew an armed combatant for the next episode of killing. And neither the leadership on either side, nor the people, can see, or will allow, any other way forward.

SPORT

And now, like any news bulletins, we come to sports. And by any measure 2023 was the year when women's sporting prowess eclipsed the men's teams' achievements. AFLW truly came of age in 2023 and the Matildas did the same for the round ball game. Their friendly against France at Docklands Stadium, Melbourne, attracted 50,000 spectators.

And in the pool, where women have long excelled, Ariarne Titmus broke the 400-metre women's freestyle world record at the 2023 World Aquatics Championships in Fukuoka.

However, New Zealand won the Bledisloe Cup, again, again.

Well, that's my take on 2023. Good bye, 2023. I shall not miss you too much.

Vincent O'Donnell
Media Analyst

SERIOUS QUESTIONS UNANSWERED ON LUXURY APARTMENTS IN FORSTER



Building work halted on Wallis St development

Steel frames, trusses and equipment lie rusting in the sea air in Wallis Street, Forster since November 9, thanks to a stop work order by NSW Fair Trading to halt work immediately on a development called Divinity.

The site in Wallis St, Forster is fenced and paddocked and still has an Elders real estate sign inviting buyers to buy one of the 38 luxury units which includes two penthouse apartments. Most of the upper floors will have unimpeded views of the ocean, the lower floors start at \$680,000.

A representative of Elders refused to comment on anything concerning the sale, even when asked to confirm that 9 apartments had already been sold off the plan.

The sign has not been taken down despite a press release from NSW Fair Trading issued on November 3rd that the current work did not comply with the construction Certificate and that failure to comply was an offence that could result in criminal proceedings.

STOP WORK ORDER

NSW Fair Trading Assistant Building Commissioner Matthew Whitton issued the stop work order for two reasons. The first that the Stage 1 Construction Certificate had been exceeded and secondly that there were no authorised construction certificates to undertake work for Stage 2 or Stage 3.

The builder supervising Stage 2 is Geroze Azzi who holds a current building license, but it is restricted to contracts up to the value of \$20,000.

Matthew Whitton made the order to stop work on Divinity following a number of inspections to other sites in Forster, Red Head, Old Bar, Harrington, Taree and Wingham during a four-day compliance blitz to check that developers and builders had appropriate approvals and construction certificates to undertake work.

These inspections are part of a Construct NSW decision, coupled with recent NSW State government moves to restore confidence in the residential building market.

Site inspectors assessed tradespeople's licences, builder and certifier signage placements, insurance policies of contractors and building standards throughout the checks.

As a result, approximately \$11,000 worth of fines were issued, while seven matters are currently under investigation, including the Wallis St, Forster stop work order.

In the case of Divinity, the Stage 1 Construction Certificate license obtained by the developer extended to and included the ground floor and podium levels.

However, on the day the inspectors arrived at the site construction was still being carried out above the ground floor level and no current Construction Certificates had been issued for any of this work from MidCoast Council.

Mr Whitton said what was concerning was that permission for Stage 2 and Stage 3 relating to basement structural walls/columns and the ground floor slab are particularly important for safety reasons.

It is obvious to local residents, that further building works have been carried out prior to the stop

work order on what looks like a further five floors of what is slated to become a high-rise apartment complex.

According to Godfrey Franz from Matrix Property Group in North Sydney, whose company sold the Divinity luxury development 2 years ago for \$2 million, having no licensed builder on site and exceeding application certificates is very serious.

"The buyers we sold to were two developers in Newcastle," he says.

The acquisition now known as Wallis St Unit Trust has a registered office in a private property at 11/30-32 Lawrence St, Peakhurst, a south west Sydney suburb. The company ABN is 49485326692.

CURRENT EYE SORE

Residents wonder, now that a stop work order is in place, if this current eye sore in their street will ever be completed.

The most affected residents live in a luxury apartment building opposite called The Crest and have watched for the past nine months in dismay at the constant noise of construction, dust and frequent road closures by big trucks, two sky high cranes and earth moving equipment.

There have been concrete mixers, many deliveries of building materials and the added noise of water being constantly pumped by a generator from the sandy foundations.

"The road itself has even been undermined by the digging and the heavy equipment," says a resident who is fed up and prefers not to give her name.

It is not as if authorities have been ignoring the problems that

have arisen during site preparation and construction on the foundations.

On October 10, an unauthorised building works written notice was issued by certifier, Ben Leedham from Aramini & Leedham Consulting, who noted that building works were being carried out without a valid construction certificate covering existing works.

They directed the person responsible to apply to MidCoast Council for a building information certificate for the unauthorised works.

They alerted NSW Fair Trading that the builder listed on the Stage 2 Construction Certificate held a restricted building license and was therefore unlicensed for the work being carried out. They also wrote they considered it could result in significant harm or loss to the public or occupiers if not rectified.

A draft copy of the Order was sent to the developer and to MidCoast Council and to the Principal Certifier.

The developer responded by making written representation five days later, but it was considered unsatisfactory and NSW Fair Trading authorised the stop work order to go ahead.

Mr Whitton says the restriction placed on the Builder's license is ongoing and remains unresolved.

His department is waiting to receive details about a nominated supervisor at the Development and/or a Builder licensed to undertake work of this nature and to make application for the necessary Construction Certificates.

How long will it take...who knows?

Sherry Stumm

COAL AND GAS EXPORTS MUST END

Our coal and gas exports are growing global carbon emissions. They are inextricably linked to the extreme weather events, displacement, and devastation that the world is witnessing.



As the world's third largest exporter of coal and gas, Australia bears a weighty responsibility in the unfolding climate crisis. Our fossil fuel exports are amplifying CO2 emissions and global vulnerabilities to climate collapse. They must end.

Climate collapse is happening now. Floods, fires, and storms are wreaking havoc across the globe, leaving no corner or group of peoples untouched. Antarctic and Arctic ice is dwindling at unprecedented rates, global temperatures have soared to alarming heights, and the anomalies - differences between the current and historical norms - are reaching new records. The world is in the midst of a dire situation, one that the United Nations Secretary-General has described as "climate collapse".

But Australia continues to expand and promote coal and gas exports. Our coal and gas exports are growing global carbon emissions. They are inextricably linked to the extreme weather events, displacement, and devastation that the world is witnessing.

Economic diversification is critical to safeguarding Australia's national interests in the face of climate collapse. We have the capacity to become a renewable energy superpower, exporting clean energy solutions to the world while simultaneously securing our energy future. By redirecting our export sector towards renewables, technology, and sustainable industries, Australia can also build resilience and adaptability. But we are still hooked on coal and gas exports. This also leaves us more and more exposed to liability for climate impacts.

Ceasing coal and gas exports will have immediate and tangible health and environmental benefits. Cleaner air, diminished pollution-related health issues, and preservation of our ecosystems are essential to our well-being. Pollution from burning coal causes millions of deaths annually across the globe, and thousands in Australia. When we close coal export facilities like those in Newcastle, asthma and lung disease will decline significantly.

There are more jobs in renewable energy than coal and gas. A just transition, supported by comprehensive community assistance, job transition initiatives, and reskilling opportunities, can ensure that no community or worker bears the brunt of this monumental shift.

The path ahead will be challenging, but it is an imperative choice. The negative impacts of staying

addicted to coal and gas exports will be much higher. It is time for Australia to redirect its trajectory and become a renewable energy superpower rather than a peddler of outdated and dangerous energy sources.

Gregory Andrews

Gregory represented Australia as an Ambassador and High Commissioner in West Africa, and as a diplomat in China, Japan and United Nations negotiations. He was Australia's first-appointed Threatened Species Commissioner and led development and implementation of Australia's first Threatened Species Strategy. An experienced senior executive, Gregory worked at SES levels in the Departments of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Environment, Climate Change, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

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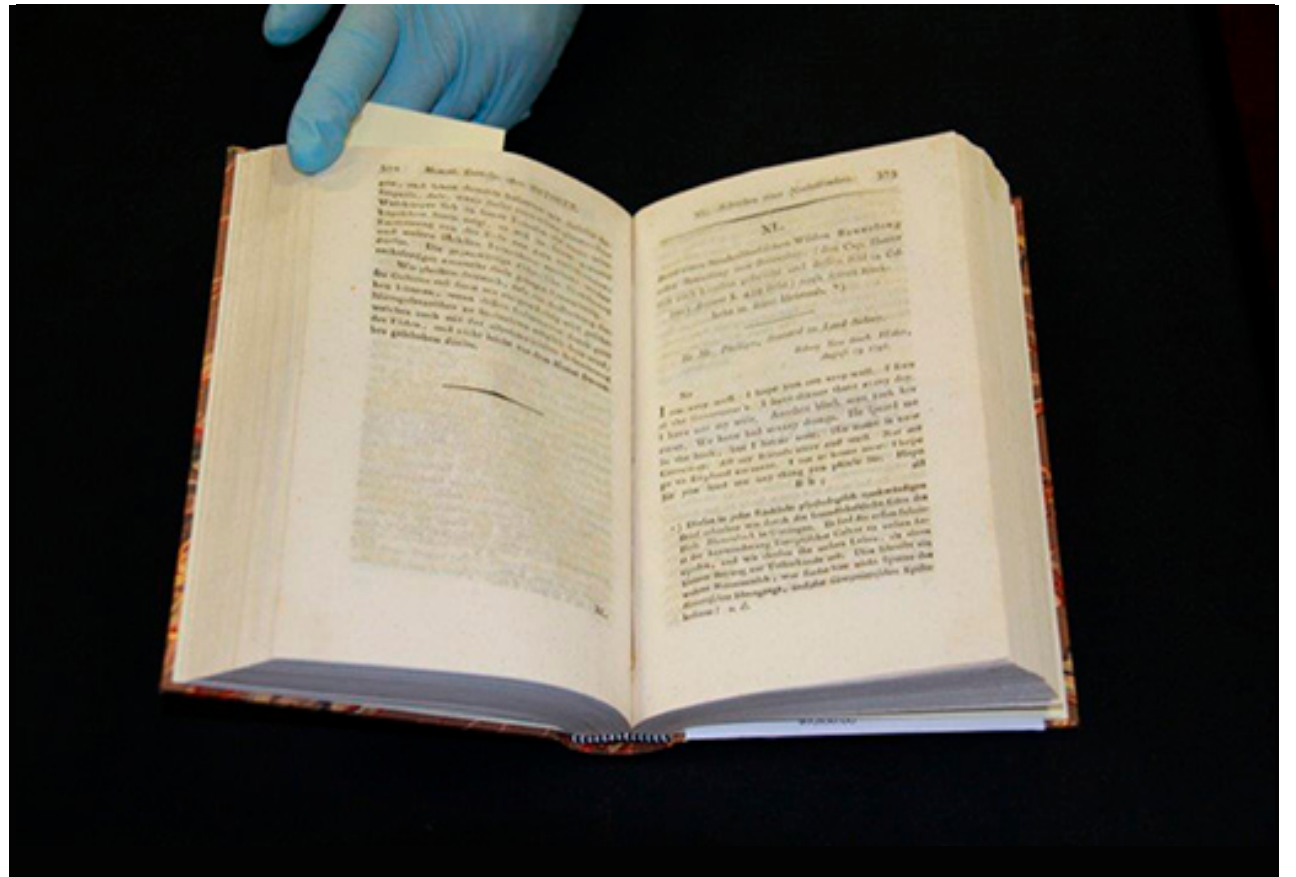
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BENNELONG—MAN OF TWO CULTURES



The AIATSIS Collection holds a very precious copy of what is considered to be the first known use of written English by an Aboriginal Australian. It is a copy of what is known as the 'Bennelong Letter' and represents a seminal work in Australian Aboriginal literature and an authentic Aboriginal voice. It is also the first time that an Aboriginal author has appeared in print.



Interesting to read in the First Nation's Australia Writers Network, a story about famed Bennelong.

Bennelong is a significant Indigenous figure. The letter he composed in 1796 in English was an achievement as many people for years firmly believed Aborigines were too wild and could never be taught to read or write English.

Addressed to Mr Phillip, Steward to Lord Sidney, the letter is a testament to the role Bennelong played as an intelligent and curious man bridging two very different cultures.

John Paul Janke, Director of Community and public Relations at AIA-TIS and a presenter on NITV, says it's priceless because of its link with early contact between the traditional people of Sydney and the First Fleet.

He also points out that the letter represents a remarkable diplomacy achieved at that time between black and white Australia.

Woollarawarre Bennelong was an initiated tribal man who led a re-markable life during the early years of European settlement in Australia.

He was born a member of the Wangal clan, part of the Eora nation, on the south side of the Parramatta River in about 1764.

Captured by Governor Arthur Phillip who'd been ordered to es-

tablish relationships with the local people, Bennelong went on to learn to speak English, form a friendship with Governor Phillip while living in a hut specially built for him near Government House.

In the letter Bennelong thanks Mrs Phillip for nursing him during his illness and asks for stockings and handkerchiefs. He also explains that he no longer has a wife as another black man had taken her away.

The letter was taken to England by Governor John Hunter who handed it to Joseph Banks who passed it on to the Hungarian born astronomer Baron Franz Xavier von Zach who published it in his 1801 journal of geography and astronomy.

“It's celebrated as the first use of English by an Aboriginal author”

“It's celebrated as the first use of English by an Aboriginal author. Here you have a traditional man using English and dictating to a scribe,

which went on to be published,” says John Paul Janke.

It is believed that the letter was dictated to a scribe rather than written by Bennelong himself and it states:

“Sir, I am very well. I hope you are very well. I live at the governor's. I have every day dinner there. I have not my wife; another black man took her away. We have had muzzy doings; he speared me in the back, but I better now; his name is Carroway. All my friends alive and well. Not me go to England no more. I am at home now. I hope Mrs Phillips is very well. You nurse me madam when I sick. You very good madam; thank you madam, and hope you remember me madam, not forget. I know you very well madam. Madam, I want stockings, thank you madam. Send me two pair of stockings. You my good Madam. Thank you Madam. Sir, you give my duty to Lord Sidney. Thank you very good my lord, very good. Hope very well all Family, very well. Sir send me you please some handkerchiefs for pocket. You please Sir send me some shoes. Two pair you please. Bennelong.”

Whilst the letter is written in English, the Aboriginal voice of Bennelong comes through in expressions such as “his name was Carroway”. “Carraway” or “caruey”

(white cockatoo) was a young uninitiated Cadigal man who appropriated Bennelong's wife Kurubarabula. The word “muzzy” is thought to represent a transcription error of the word “murri” which means “big” in the Sydney language.

The request for stockings, a handkerchief and shoes may seem inappropriate in this context, but from an Aboriginal etiquette point of view it reflects the practice of reciprocity and gift exchange that he would have expected from his English hosts.

It seems Bennelong was a master politician, brokering alliances among various factions via marriages for himself and his sisters in order to secure, and later extend, his leadership within his Wangal clan. This account challenges the oft told story that Bennelong was shunned by Europeans and his own people alike on his return from England.

“We can hear his voice and we can only imagine what he was thinking, returning from England and escaping from captivity to live a traditional life again.”

Bennelong died in 1813 and was buried in the orchard of brewer James Squire in the suburb of Putney in Sydney.

A DECLARATION OF HUMAN RESPONSIBILITIES?

Following Human Rights Day (December 10) great progress has been made in the international protection of human rights. Perhaps it is now time to go to the next step: create a parallel set of human responsibilities or duties.

In my involvement in the international protection of human rights over the last four decades this now seems to be the largest single missing element in the human rights cause.

The Declaration of Human Rights on December 10 1948 was done in reaction to the gross violations of human rights, especially in World War II. During the war the Allies were not only fighting against the German, Italian and Japanese dictators, but they were also fighting for a better post-war world.

In 1944-5, when the UN Charter was being finalised, there was a move to attach an “international bill of rights”, similar to the Bill of Rights attached to the United States Constitution. There was not enough time to write the document and so it was agreed that an early task of the new international organisation would be to create such a document.

In fact, the task was divided into two stages:

A basic declaration which (like all UN General Assembly declarations) has no binding power upon any government (even if it voted for it on the day).

The second stage is to convert a declaration into a treaty which governments may or may not choose to sign and ratify, and which is then binding on those governments that have ratified it. This second stage came in 1966 with the two Human Rights Covenants. Most governments have now ratified the Covenants and they continue to grow via optional protocols such as the one

aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights – now one of the 20th century’s most important international documents – ends with two responsibilities. Interestingly, while people are well aware in general terms of the rights listed, few people seem to know about the final two paragraphs of the document.

Article 29 acknowledges in effect that everyone has duties to the community. The implication is that a person may exercise his or her rights but not to the detriment of others. For example, the freedom of press does not mean freedom to libel, while freedom of association does not entitle people to join together in bands to rob or murder.

Article 30 states that nothing in the declaration may be interpreted as implying for any state, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights set forth in the declaration. In short, the document should not be used to endanger the freedom of others.

The Club of Rome is a Switzerland-based think tank (of which I have been a member since 1993) which first made its name with the best-selling 1972 environmental warning *Limits to Growth*.

The Club of Rome has continued to address global issues, including the possible creation of a declaration of responsibility.

“A Declaration of Human Responsibilities” was then presented to the

1991 Club of Rome annual conference. The seven page document was in draft form and not in the style of a United Nations declaration (a list of specific paragraphs). It was really more of an argument in favour of creating such a declaration rather than a detailed listing of what should be in it. It called on the UN to study this argument further. It was circulated to UN bodies but nothing came of it at the time.

Another initiative came from the InterAction Council, based in Tokyo, and drawn from many retired senior politicians. “A Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities” was proposed in September 1997.

Its 19 articles (written in the form of a standard UN declaration) covered such matters as: every person having a responsibility to treat all people in a humane way; it said “what you do not wish to be done to yourself, do not do to others”; everyone should respect the life of others; each person should behave with integrity, honesty and fairness; and people should speak and act truthfully. The draft declaration received some sympathetic media coverage at the time.

To sum up so far, there has been no lack on ideas of what such a declaration of human responsibilities/human duties could contain. The issue is more one of discussing why so little has been achieved.

One explanation is that talk of “responsibility” runs against the current spirit of the times, which has the selfish, self-absorbed emphasis of “what is in it for me”, “I know

my rights” and “I want to look after number one”.

By contrast, the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights was rapidly created in about 18 months because it had caught the spirit of the then times: revulsion at the suffering in World War II, anger at the international community’s failure to stand up to the dictators in the 1930s, and a determination to do better.

There is not a similar determination to take action on human responsibilities. The current dominant paradigm of new right economic rationalism encourages a narrow, selfish short-horizon approach to living. Politicians now rarely talk of vision and nation-building.

What seemed a simple idea to complement human rights with human responsibilities has become more complicated than was first thought. Doubtless individuals and non-governmental organisations will continue to advocate for some form of declaration of human responsibilities.

It will be a protracted struggle – but, then, so were the long campaigns for human rights prior to 1948, such as the movement against slavery and the campaign to end racism. Major changes in dominant paradigms do not occur overnight (if they did, then they could be eradicated equally quickly).

Keith Suter

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'Forensically researched and absolutely captivating'
JACK LATIMORE, *THE AGE*

In the last 12 months I have reviewed four other books which, each in its own way, deal with aspects of the brutality involved in the way that Europeans stole the land we now call Australia.

In the enlightening, albeit somewhat shocking book titled *Killing for Country*, author David Marr tells the story of the involvement of some of his ancestors in the violent dispossession of Aboriginal land during the 19th century.

Two passages in Marr's book demonstrate the brutality and violence of the takeover. One inci-

dent, on the country we now call the Liverpool Plains, was described in a contemporaneous report as follows:

"...the whites, as usual, resorting to the use of fire-arms, poured in several destructive volleys, firing on the blacks as they climbed trees for security; and in one instance, as related, ripping open with a knife the bowels of an unfortunate being who had fallen wounded from a tree."

Then Marr tells us that:

"At Waterloo Creek on 26 January 1838, Nunn's troops and Mounted Police drove a large number of Kamilaroi into a swamp and slaughtered at least fifty."

These are just two of the many sickening events mentioned in the book - massacres inspired by racism, and the selfish desire to protect the land they had stolen from the Aboriginal peoples.

The methods used by the Europeans in the years following the invasion were guns and poisons administered by the police and the settlers, aided and abetted by the law and the colonial governments. And of course, introduced diseases such as smallpox played their part.

THINK AGAIN

"But that", some readers might think, "is history. No more do we massacre innocent Aboriginal people, and we now have laws to protect them and their land."

Title Fight will force the reader to think again.

Cleary's well researched, clearly written, and cleverly titled book demonstrates that the dispossession process is continuing unabated in the 21st century, although guns have been replaced by teams of lawyers being paid handsomely by cashed up corporations using the legal system to destroy Aboriginal land and cultural sites.

The flyleaf of the book has this to say about author Paul Cleary:

"Paul Cleary began his career with Fairfax, leading to a decade of economic policy reporting in the Canberra press gallery... His work has focussed on resource conflicts and policy, and his books include *Trillion Dollar Baby*, *Mine-Field*, *Shakedown* and *Too Much Luck*, which The New Yorker described as a 'fierce concise book' that investigated how the resources boom was being 'classically mismanaged'. In recent years he has worked with and written about the First Nations

Peoples of Australia."

Cleary's expertise about how corporations operate to get their own way in dealing with First Nations Peoples is on clear display in this book.

The book begins with a helpful and quite detailed chronology of significant events since Aboriginal people first settled in the Pilbara region of north-west Western Australia about 50,000 years ago before introducing us to the 106-year-old Yindjibarndi man called Ned Cheedy in English, and Manyarnbangu in Yindjibarndi. Cheedy, we are told "is Yindjibarndi's oldest and most respected lawman, who has worked as a stockman, a windmill man and a lay preacher, as well as being a foster parent to many children." The prologue has this to say about Cheedy:

"He expresses great sadness about the impact of iron ore mining on the traditional lands of the Pilbara, and finds it hard to comprehend how large tracts of Aboriginal lands are being dug up and shipped to the other side of the world."

One of the mining companies responsible for digging up large parts of the Pilbara is a company operated by Andrew 'Twiggy' Forrest known as Fortescue Metals Group (FMG), and this book tells the tale of the way that FMG rushed to "develop" its iron ore mines in the Pilbara, and in the process "damaged and destroyed ancient Aboriginal heritage."

TACTICS USED

But it was not only the fact that heritage sites were being destroyed, as the book progresses the reader will be horrified to learn about some of the tactics used by FMG in the way that it dealt with the Aboriginal community to get its mining operations underway in the Pilbara, particularly the use of aggressive and costly litigation.

Forrest, who is Australia's second richest person, created an iron ore mining company that in the space of just 15 years went from almost nothing to a business worth \$70 billion, and as Cleary explains, it did not achieve this by being nice. We hear that:

"Underpinning FMG's business success are 'unconscionable' or man-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

NOT JUST THE WIFE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER



Sally Warriner

Hardie Grant RRP \$36.99

It's interesting to read about another person's life as one can reflect on how we may have chosen a different way if we had either the opportunity, or the pressing need to seek adventure.

Sally Warriner writes a ripping tale of her various adventures travelling and working in Europe and then coxing a jalopy with her partner through Asia to Malaysia before flying home.

Returning to Australia, she is courted by a copybook Top End stockman she calls the GM, (we never learn his name), who wears big hats, Cuban-heeled top boots, white RMs or Wrangler jeans and blue RM shirts, never tucked in. She agrees to marry him but leaves the night before their wedding in Broome, returning nine months later to tell him she's sorry and now she is ready to marry him.

He flies her in his private plane from Kununurra to Mount House, a one-million-acre station he is managing in the Kimberley. Sally throws herself into her outback life, often flying in a tiny 150 Cessna with her husband to muster cattle, learning to ride well enough to go out with the station's stockmen, even sleeping overnight in a swag in the stock camp when it is too late to return home.

A fully trained nurse, she also finds she is the on-call person for all illnesses and emergencies for European as well as the Aboriginal communities. These were not in short supply for the young stockmen at weekends like to hold rodeos and often hurt themselves.

Six months later the GM is promoted to an even larger property called Brunette Downs where he is managing a huge cattle station of endless flat grasslands on the Barkly Tablelands in the Northern Territory.

Owned by the same company, it

is easy to pack up, as the GM has no furniture or trinkets, just tools and saddlery. Sally has retained little from her four and a half years travelling. The belongings of her two young stepsons David and Yap, (a nickname because he talked nonstop) are also easy to pack.

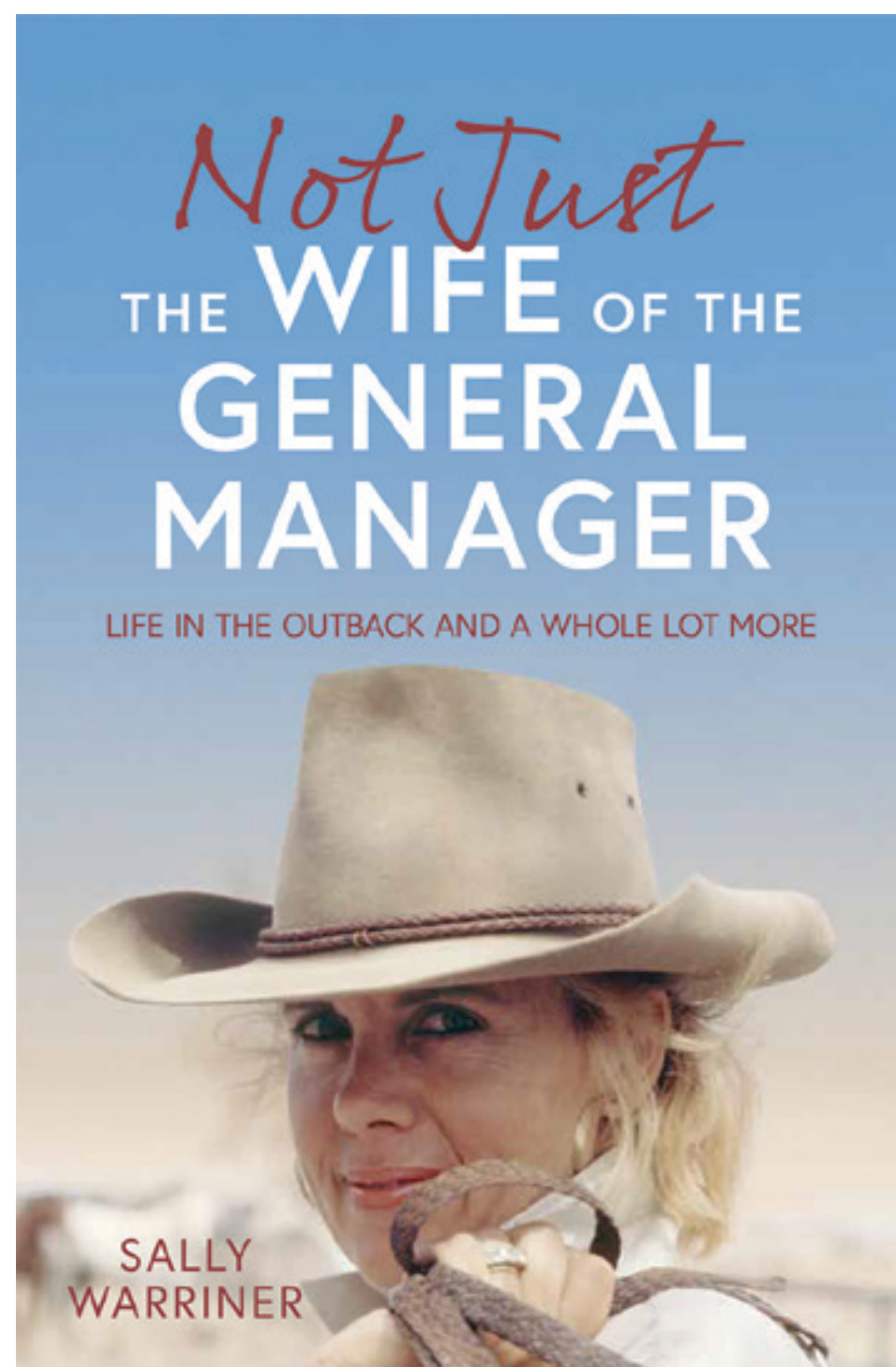
The boys belong to the GM and his first wife who'd died of cancer five years earlier. They are at boarding school and it become one of Sally's jobs to oversee their welfare and continuing education.

The new homestead of nearly three million acres of cattle grazing with a large inland river system flowing into Lake Sylvester, was the jewel in the crown of the US company King Ranch Pastoral's vast holdings in Australia.

The homestead came with staff, so Sally was hardly overwhelmed by domestic work, but with eight family houses for forty station staff including a saddler, a horse breaker, a station-based cook, a pilot, two grader drivers, two bore runners, an accountant, a secretary, even a lab technician to manage blood testing for disease, it was a lot.

It ran more than 50,000 head of cattle, 800 horses, two mobile stock camps and a station-based stud camp. A big job for a 27-year-old that included running a clinic at the station for two hours each morning and overseeing the domestic staff in the house, making sure the men men's quarters were clean and tidy and riding or flying out with her husband in their plane to help with the mustering – which became the best way for her to spend time with him.

During their many years of marriage, Sally supervised her two stepsons, plus the three boys born to her and the GM, also an Aboriginal boy whose family battled alcohol problems



and who lived with them until he left school at 16. So with six youngsters to mother the GM made sure they were her responsibility as his priority continued to be his huge workload.

No matter how well Sally handled her various roles on the cattle station, making sure every aspect ran smoothly, she admits to feeling her input was taken for granted.

When Brunette Downs is sold, Sally and the GM in partnership with

two others buy Newcastle Waters, a 3.2-million-acre station on the west Barkly Tablelands. It means rough living in an ugly fibro house surrounded by scrub for several years until Kerry Packer buys them out and with the GM in charge, pours money into the station, building luxurious accommodation and making it an important part of his pastoral empire.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

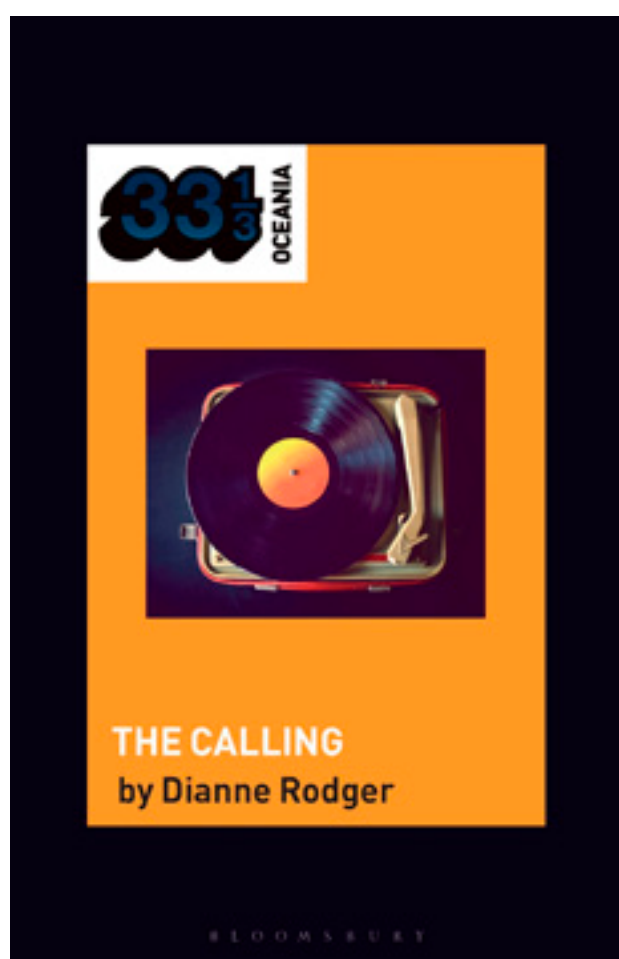
THE CALLING

THE EARLY HISTORIES OF HIP-HOP IN AUSTRALIA



Dianne Rodger

Bloomsbury Academic RRP \$24.99



If you happen to know what such things as posse tracks, battle raps and beat boxes are, or if you are familiar with “Dumb Enough” or “The Nosebleed Section”, of if you don’t give a blank stare when someone says that they are MCing or DJing, then you are very unlikely to be a baby boomer, and you might also know that Suffa, Pressure and Debris comprise a Hip-Hop group out of Adelaide known as the Hilltop Hoods.

If I ever thought about Hip-Hop, which was infrequently, then

I’d quickly dismiss it as, in Rodger’s own words, ... “an example of a foreign cultural form usurping local culture – an emblem of the dire impacts of globalisation.” Not even real music.

I’m not sure how it was that I picked up and decided to read this quite short (102 pages) book by university lecturer Dianne Rodger, but I’m glad that I did. For me, it was a fascinating excursion into a music form and sub-culture about which I knew nothing.

Before attempting this review, I embarked on a steep learning curve. I spent time

chatting to my son Hamish, who studied music at university, about things Hip-Hop, and shocked my Spotify App by playing artists such as Codfish, Stay Human, The Wire and of course, the Hilltop Hoods. I learned that there are many different streams of Hip-Hop, some of which I quite enjoyed.

I also had an obviously much outdated image of an anthropologist as being some older white male in a pith helmet and sweaty shirt, notebook in hand, living in some remote part of the Amazon or the highlands of New Guinea. Apparently



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

ifently unfair agreements that give the company unfettered access to Aboriginal land for undefined projects, for indefinite periods and at minimal cost. In the rush to develop, FMG has been associated with some unsavoury practices, such as splitting communities, negotiating a royalty of just 2.5 cents per tonne. When FMG has met still resistance from native title groups, the company has employed what its own executives describe as 'tough and savage' litigation at a 'gruelling pace' to overcome opposition."

However, opposition it did encounter, and it came in the form of Michael Woodley, a young Yindjibarndi man, immersed in traditional culture, who had the guts to stand up to FMG and to lead his community in a thirteen year, ultimately successful fight, against FMG.

SPIRITUAL CONNECTION

The back cover of the book provides an accurate description of the essence of this book when it says:

"Title Fight reveals the Wild West of iron-ore mining in the Pilbara. It tells the story of how a small group of Indigenous Australians fought tenaciously to defend their spiritual connection to Country. And, at a moment of national reckoning with our colonial and ancient past, with our relationship to the land, it asks some critical questions: Who does the land belong to? Who gets to choose what

it's used for? And whose side are we on?

When we listen to the Federal Treasurer or others boasting about the way that Australia's iron ore exports have contributed greatly to the nation's wealth, a reading of this book should cause the listener to pause and reflect on the ways and means used to achieve such an outcome, and whether it is all worth it.

LAND RIGHTS

Most Australians will be familiar with the Mabo court case, which for the first time recognised the traditional land rights of indigenous peoples, and know of the land rights legislation that followed. However, few Australians will probably realise how complicated, costly and difficult such claims are, and this is well illustrated by the Yindjibarndi claim to parts of their country:

"Twenty-six long years after first lodging their claim in 1994, the Yindjibarndi had finally succeeded in having their exclusive possession rights over parts of their country recognised by the courts."

As a retired lawyer, I found Title Fight difficult to read without feeling some anger about the way that, despite progress in some areas, our legal system operates so unfairly in favour of the rich and powerful, and particularly to the detriment of our First Nations Peoples.

This is a must-read book.

John Watts

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

Managing Newcastle Waters for Kerry Packer, also means constantly entertaining his friends at what is a beautifully appointed cattle station with acres of lush lawn and rose gardens, plus a large swimming pool. KP as she called him, increasingly relied on "the GM's wife" to organise adventures by plane for him and his many guests including staging his annual New Years Eve parties at the Palm Beach house.

Like her sister, Kimberley icon Susan Bradley, Sally is a fun loving extrovert and engaging raconteur. No wonder she eventually sick of being overlooked and under-appreciated. One wonders if GM's wives are so taken for granted these days!

FINAL STRAW

Sally writes that the final straw that made up her mind came when a journalist asked to interview them both knowing she was a personal assistant and in a business sense an equal partner with the GM, as well as his wife, lover, friend, confidant, entertainer and greatest supporter. When their visitor didn't interview her, but spent hours with the GM in his office, she became suspicious.

The magazine story was submitted to them to vet before publication and she was not included. In fact, the ultimate insult she says was that she did not even warrant a mention. Furious she marched into the GM's office and told him if he allowed publication she'd sue. He was surprised at her reaction!

Some years later still feeling unappreciated, she had a love affair with a man she describes as conservative, anally retentive, Oxford-edu-

cated, Scottish Presbyterian, private club-attending polo playing farmer. She says without a doubt he was the most devastatingly handsome man she'd ever met.

She goes on to happily admit her shallowness of character in being seduced by his good looks, totally oblivious to the myriad reasons why they were not well suited. He said he loved her, that he would change his life, go to Africa with her to do volunteer aid work and save the world, a goal she'd had for many years.

ENDED IN TEARS

Their four-year affair ended in tears for them both, not to mention the collateral damage to her husband, her lover's wife and both families. She regrets the pain and damage, but she doesn't regret the affair which she insists was one of her most exquisite experiences.

Following her divorce, she moved to Brisbane to volunteer for Médecins sans frontières. Her brood of boys by now are all old enough and she feels free to go away for extended periods without feeling responsible for them.

Throughout the book, Sally shows what sort of person she is more by her actions rather than any deep thoughtful self-analysis. Neither does she seem to mourn the loss of the holidays and intimate times she and her husband gave up because of their heavy work commitments.

Nevertheless, it is an interesting story she tells with lots of outback drama. The twists and turns make it a real page turner. She now lives in Byron where she smells the sea, instead of the dust and roses!

Sherry stumm.

ROAD WRECKS

If I have one more visitor from anywhere complaining about our roads, I'll scream!



Yes, they are terrible. Yes, they are dangerous. Yes, they have been the pits for years. MidCoast Council dropped the ball long ago. There's been little roadside maintenance or landscaping, trimming, weeding and little watering. While all that is unsightly, our roads are downright dangerous.

Now that heavy haulage trucks etc thunder along Tinonee Road (once a quiet backwater), Bucketts Way has had sad and bad accidents, a quiet drive through rural scenery has become a frightening and life threatening exercise, peppered with many accidents and near tragedies. It doesn't help when road signage

is inconsistently placed, obscured or downright silly. There are many complaints about the bad corner on Wingham Road (where we lost all those beautiful trees ... for what?) which is marked with a peculiarly written speed limit of 90 kms.

90?? Drivers don't agree.

Since the floods and fires they have an easy out to blame. Whatever happened to the millions \$\$ for roads?

Could one sue for a death caused by lack of maintenance on a road?

Slow down. Take care. It's dangerous out there!

DM

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Email: editor@manningcommunitynews.com

Phone: 0411 819 674

(Owner no longer able to travel)

LURING BEES TO THE HONEY POT



Why is attracting bees to your garden important? These valuable little visitors pollinate many of your plants. In fact, over 75% of the world’s flowering plants rely on pollinators like bees to reproduce. Without bees, your garden and the world would look very bare.



Bees are the world’s best pollinators because they collect pollen from flowers to feed their young. Sadly bee populations in Australia and around the world are declining. As we clear land for urban development, remove plants, create flowerless landscapes and use harmful chemicals on our plants, we cause bee population losses. The good news is you can help, by encouraging bees to your garden.

Australia is home to 1,600 different native bee species - quite impressive when you consider there are around 20,000 bee varieties worldwide. Most of these native bees are solitary and live alone, and although they don’t make honey, they are important pollinators.

Our native bees are beautiful and diverse. Some are covered in thick, furry hair while others are smooth and shiny. Some sport yellow and black stripes while others are blue in colour. They come in a range of sizes too, from the spectacular 24 millimetre carpenter bee to the world’s smallest bee, the 2 millimetre Quasihesma bee. So how do we attract them?



Bees are after one thing and that’s the food in flowers: pollen and nectar. So the more flowers in your garden, the more bees you’ll attract.

CREATE A BEE HABITAT GARDEN

But some flowers are more attractive to bees than others. This is because they may have more pollen and nectar, they may flower at a time when there aren’t many other plants in flower or the flower structure may simply be better for landing and feasting.

By planting a mix of plants which flower throughout the year, you’re giving bees a regular food supply. This will encourage them to stay, feed, drink, shelter and even reproduce in your garden.

Rather than scattering flowers randomly, plant large patches. This

encourages bees to forage and cross pollinate the plants as they move efficiently from flower to flower. Water your flowers deeply and often to ensure flowers produce plenty of nectar and pollen.

CHOOSE PLANTS NATIVE BEES LOVE

Most native bees have cleverly evolved to collect pollen and nectar from native and non-native flowering plants, making them ‘generalist’ foragers. But there are around 100 species of native bees that are specialist bees, so it’s worth planting a handful of native plants in your garden too.

Below are lists of some of the best bee-attracting flowers to include in your garden.

Native plants	Grevillea
Non-native plants	Cosmos
Herbs	Dill
Banksia	Hardenbergia
Alyssum	Lavender
Basil	Fennel
Bottlebrush	Lilly Pilly
Buddleia	Roses
Borage	Hyssop
Eucalypt	Westringia
Calendula	Salvia
Coriander	Sage



In Australia, we’re encouraged to mulch our plants, but native bees that nest in the ground find it hard to dig through thick layers of mulch. So leave an area of bare ground, at least a metre squared, to encourage ground-nesting bees into your garden.

AVOID USING CHEMICALS IN YOUR GARDEN

Unfortunately, some garden chemicals are harmful to bees. If you want to attract bees, steer away from products that contain neonicotinoids. Consider only applying chemicals to infested areas, avoid or minimise sprays during flowering and avoid spraying when you can see bees actively foraging in your plants. If you need an insecticide, try eco-oil or eco-neem which are bee safe. If a plant is infested with many pests, it may simply need feeding, pruning or pulling out.

Wingham Nursery
02 65534 570

PROVIDE SHELTER

Native bees don’t build the structures we associate with honeybees, but they do need places to nest, which vary depending on the species.

Resin and leafcutter bees will nest in large drilled holes in wood, which mimic the natural cavities produced by wood-boring insects. Resin bees also like to shelter in small cavities in rockeries or layers of rolled bark. Hollow stems can be bundled up to attract reed and masked bees.



ANTIQUES AND COLLECTABLES

The Christmas spirit is forever, not for just one day, be loving, kind, sharing and giving and you will receive the many benefits of being much loved. The good you do for others is the good you do for yourself.



Rivals! Vegemite versus Marmite

Have you visited the Manning Regional Museum in Bent St Wingham, lately? It is an eye opener. A great place to get ideas for existing or new collecting. The team at the Museum, are doing a wonderful job displaying and archiving our local area's history. A wonderful diversity. The displays rates as one of the best Regional Museum exhibitions in the state. Bring yourselves, your family and visitors for a great experience of reminiscing and discoveries over the festive season. You won't be disappointed! Open 10am until 4pm daily.

Spanning back nearly 100 years, Australia's most well-loved spread has been on quite a journey. The history of VEGEMITE, is an incredible story that has led to a historic Aussie brand.

Australia's favourite spreadable paste wasn't always a favourite. Beginning in 1922, the Fred Walker Company (today known as the Kraft Food Company) hired a young chemist to create a rich spread, high in Vitamin B, that would become a healthy staple in everyone's cupboards. After several months, Dr Cyril P Callister, Australia's leading food technologist during the 1920s and 30s, created an edible paste out of brewer's yeast. To get the Aus-

tralian public involved, the Fred Walker Company announced a national competition to create a name for their product. Although there is no record of the winner's name, Fred Walker's daughter chose the winning name, Vegemite, out of a hat.

However, convincing the public that Vegemite spread was a healthier than Marmite, an English spread that had dominated the Aussie market for years, was much harder than originally thought. At one stage, in 1928, the Vegemite name was changed to Parwill to further competition. Tricky slogan, "If Ma might, Pa will". It didn't work & the Vegemite name was readopted.

RECOMMENDED

In 1939 the Vegemite Brand received an official product endorsement from the British Medical Association and was then advertised in the British Medical Journal. It was from this promotion that medical professionals and baby care experts began to recommend Vegemite spread to their patients due to the spread being rich in Vitamin B.

As a result, by 1942, Vegemite became a staple food, found in every Australian home.

As Vegemite gained popularity nationwide, Armed Forces also began to buy Vegemite in bulk during World War II due to the nutritional

value of the spread. As a result of huge demand, during the war years, the spread was rationed across Australia.

Once the war ended and the baby boom commenced, Vegemite had well and truly formed a part of Aussies hearts.

Aussies know of the iconic, unofficial anthem of our nation, the toe-tapping jingle of Happy Little Vegemites

Originating to a trio of energetic youngsters singing this song on radio in 1954, two years later Kraft Foods turned this song into a TV Campaign that you just have to sing along to.

These iconic commercials were colourised and broadcast to a new generation of Aussies in the 1980s. This anthem still remains today; reminding the nation of their favourite brand, the commercial was brought out once again in 2010.

In 2009, Cheesymite appeared on the shelves combining Vegemite and Kraft cream cheese, providing an easy spread with a less salty and milder taste. The popularity of this

cheesy spread has resulted in sales continuing to this day. In 2015 a release of Cadbury's Caramello block featuring Vegemite chocolate wasn't well accepted.

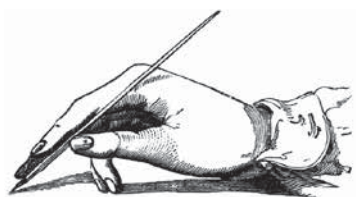
Over 22 million jars of Vegemite are sold every year, and loved by children, teenagers and adults both in Australia and overseas. There is with no doubt this is Australia's most iconic spread.

BEST LITTLE MUSEUM

Don't forget to visit our "best little Museum anywhere" in Wingham on the corner of Bent and Farquhar Streets, Rob, Adam and Bill at Clancy's in High St, Taree, Barry at – Isadora's Antiques in Victoria St. Taree, Col's Second Hand in Commerce St Taree and Sue at Delinquent Funk Isabella St Wingham and I have opened a shop, with the goodies I have collected over the last forty years (Antiques & Old Wares) at 12 Isabella St, Wingham. Call in & say hello.

I hope that collecting brings you the enjoyment that I have experienced.

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 & interesting treasures. Phone Rex - 0427 880 546



YOUR SAY

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

Dear Editor,

In your November edition you rightly castigate Dr Gillespie and the Nationals over their preference for nuclear power over renewables.

Your points about nuclear are very valid, but there is an even stronger and overarching objection. That is, significant nuclear development risks repeating just the same mistake that we have made with climate change - namely, assuming that the planet is an infinite waste dump. In my working lifetime, the concentration of CO₂ has increased from 320 ppm to 420 ppm - all over the world and irretrievably. The assumption that CO₂ emissions would just blow away was disastrously wrong.

The problem with nuclear is radioactive waste, which will accumulate in the biosphere. Like CO₂,

radioactivity is invisible, undetectable without special equipment. Many vested interests (as with CO₂) will cry out that low level waste is harmless, or that waste can be sealed in rocks or something. It isn't harmless, and accidents at nuclear power plants will continue to happen. The eventual result will be an inexorably rising tide of cancers, birth defects and other genetic problems. It won't happen this year, maybe not this century, but it will happen. Humanity will have learnt nothing from the climate crisis. How can we be that stupid?

Yours sincerely,
Roger Lainson
Crowdy Head

Dear Editor,

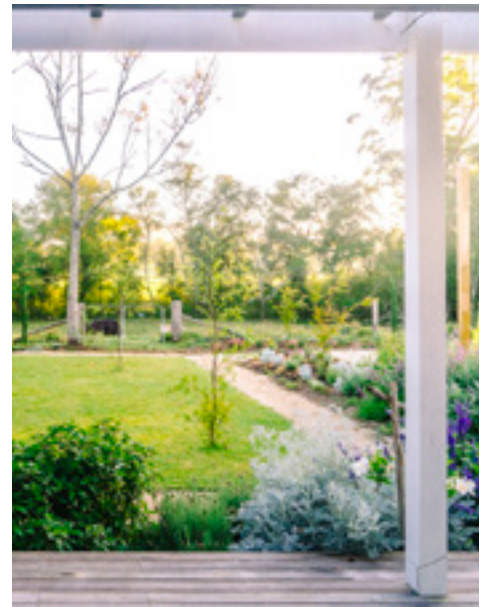
In Taree recently, my wife noticed that everyone seemed especially happy; chattering away excitedly with one another. We were puzzled as to why.

Did they all win money on The Cup? Lotto? The Pokies? Was peace declared? That's quite impossible, with an Empire whose whole economy is kept afloat with money printing and endless war. Was it because it was a nice, sunny day? We've seen lots of nice, sunny days but not this sort of behaviour. We noted there were only a few cell phones visible; I'd left mine at home too because of the Optus outage. We concluded, quite confidently, the buoyant mood and increased sociability was due to the outage and resulting paucity of mobile phones. Is there a lesson here? However it was a reminder of sunnier days when people greeted each other politely and paused to the pass the time of day in the street.

Local resident
Wingham



Newcastle press photographer Ron Morrison took this photograph of his wife, Elizabeth, outside the Plaza Private Hotel, Forster, in 1958. We'd be happy to hear readers' memories of the old Plaza, which used to stand opposite Main Beach. greg@phototimetunnel.com



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GARY & ADI, THE OWNERS, ARE RETURNING TO CAMBODIA TO CONTINUE THEIR CHARITY WORK AT HAPPY AND CO FARM, SIEM REAP.



Cause to Celebrate!

Old Bar Cellars, recently awarded National Liquor Store of the Year 2023 at this year's Retail Drinks Industry Awards is one of the largest and most extensive liquor shops in our area. Great for the festive season and a popular gift!

We stock a wide variety of Australian and International wines to suit all budgets. Plus we carry an excellent selection of vintage wine, sure to impress any connoisseur!

We also stock a huge range of mainstream, international and Australian

craft beer, ciders, and a large selection of RTD's, with new and exciting products arriving each week.

If we don't stock your favourite wine, beer or spirit, we are happy to order it in for you. We can happily cater for your next special event such as weddings, birthdays and festive season events!

Old Bar Cellars 02 6553 7328, or visit us at 49 Old Bar Rd, Old Bar.

Cheers!

Cozette and Tim Leonard

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

Publisher and Editor DI MORRISSEY

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