

Sea turtle art makes a splash at Brisbane Fashion Festival

By Mellissa Harney

A stunning sea turtle artwork by proud Kalkadoon artist Chern e Sutton has made its mark on the runway at the Brisbane Fashion Festival, bringing a powerful fusion of culture and couture to the spotlight.

Titled *Wani Wani Wantina – To Swim Side by Side*, the vibrant piece celebrates connection and Country through the image of the sea turtle, an animal close to the hearts of many coastal communities.

The design was transformed into a couture jacket by renowned fashion house Mannzilo, using their intricate Zardosi embroidery.

Sutton also walked the runway in a matching jacket, earning wide admiration and contributing to the energy of the festival’s 20th anniversary celebrations.

“It’s a way of sharing my culture

and stories while celebrating how art and fashion can bring people together,” Sutton said.

This collaboration marks the second year Sutton has worked with designer Akheel Khan, whose label Mannzilo is known for blending heritage and high fashion.

Chern es’ work has strong local ties, sharing a permanent art exhibition at Mon Repos Turtle Centre alongside her siblings, Brooke and Jesse Sutton.

The show adds to a milestone year for Sutton, who recently partnered with the Perth Mint on a limited-edition emu coin and has been chosen as the Australian representative artist to paint a baton for the 2026 Commonwealth Games King’s Baton Relay.

Her work continues to showcase the richness of contemporary Aboriginal storytelling across a range of mediums to the world.



Ruby Hunter Brown models a design showcasing Chern e Sutton’s artwork, created with Mannzilo and Akheel Khan, at the Brisbane Fashion Festival. (Image: Supplied)



Artist Chern e Sutton and Designer Akheel Khan showcase a collaborative Indigenous artwork at the Brisbane Fashion Festival. (Image: Supplied)

INSIDE THIS EDITION



SUMMERTIME IN BUNDY
The Bundy Book Tourist Guide lift-out has all you need for a happy holiday. From Page 11.



BUNDY VOLUNTEERS: ENTER TO WIN!
We invite all our volunteers to enter our free competition to win a Sunshine Coast weekend. See page 16 for details.

Bundaberg man fined \$20,000 for trafficking undersized and female mud crabs

THE man was fined \$20,000 after being caught red handed with multiple female and undersized crabs.

He was found to have committed 26 offences under the Fisheries Act, including unlawful sale and trafficking of Queensland mud crabs.

Video surveillance footage and seized mobile phone devices revealed the extent of his offences, which included evidence of ongoing illegal mud crab sales to multiple buyers across the region.

Officers uncovered a number of undersized mud crabs, including a total of 14 females, in his possession. He was fined \$20,000 and his fishing equipment was forfeited.

It was the most recent fine among several across Queensland in the past seven months.

Since May 12, 2025, more than \$61,100 in major penalties and prosecutions, and \$85,699 in on-the-spot FINS (Fisheries Infringement Notices) were issued for mud crab offences statewide.

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From the Editor.

Michael McRae
Editor / Publisher.



Coastline Newspaper Group

The Bundy Local Newspaper is Bundaberg's free newspaper covering Bundaberg, the coastal towns Bargara, Burnett Heads, Childers, Gin Gin and Mount Perry.

We wish to thank the more than 50 businesses who sponsored this newspaper and we invite our readers to support them.

Calling all Volunteers



Meals on Wheels in Bundaberg have over a hundred volunteers who deliver meals to many homes across Bundaberg every week day. Getting ready to "hit the road" are Bob Lowe, Mike Hiosan, Rob Cross, Karren Howard, Richard Gilbert, Ben Rietveld and Beth McGill.

VOLUNTEERS in Bundaberg are immensely valuable, they contribute millions of dollars in economic benefit while also strengthening social cohesion, healthcare, and community services.

Volunteers reduce the need for paid staff in areas like aged care, hospitals, and council services, saving local governments and organizations substantial funds.

Over 700 volunteer roles are currently available in Bundaberg and the Wide Bay Burnett region, showing both demand and supply

More than 50 community members dedicate time in our hospitals to improve

patient care and comfort, offering services like patient support, visitor assistance, and fundraising.

Bundaberg Regional Council relies on volunteers for events (e.g. Childers Festival), leisure activities with seniors, and even animal care at Alexandra Park Zoo.

In times of crisis (like floods or bushfires), Bundaberg's volunteers are often first responders, helping recovery efforts.

We at the Bundy Local Newspaper want to give one of our many volunteers and their family a weekend at Noosa at the Sunshine Coast.

To enter our Take a Break competition go to Page 16. Remember you must be a Volunteer to enter.

Several noted Australian entertainers died in 2025

AUSTRALIAN country-music singer and entertainer Chad Morgan, known as 'The Sheik of Scrubby Creek', was born 11 February 1933 in Wondai and died 1 January 2025 in Gin Gin at the age 91.

Chad's career spanned over 70 years and his comedic and country style made him a beloved national character.

When I first started in radio I presented a Saturday morning Country Music show on Radio 4MB Maryborough and quite often Chad's mother who lived in Urangan would call me and give me the latest news on Chad, where he was performing and his latest hits. Some of his songs had their origins in Childers e.g. *The Tough Cane Cutter from the Isis*, *Chasing Sorts in Childers* and *the Duckinwilla Dance*.

Duckinwilla is between Childers and Howard. Chad told me that someone stole the Duckinwilla sign on the Bruce Highway as a souvenir.

He was discovered after he appeared on Australia's Amateur Hour. His first song was *The Sheik of Scrubby Creek*. There is a room dedicated to Chad in the main street of Childers.

ONE of Australia's early 'celebrity chef' personalities Peter Russell Clark

Australian celebrity TV chef, author and artist; host of the 1980s show *Come and Get It* on the ABC. Peter Russell Clarke died in July aged 89 from complications follow-

ing a stroke.

He was one of Australia's early 'celebrity chef' personalities, combining cooking, art and media.

COL JOYE, the first Australian pop performer to reach number one on the local charts, died at the age of 89.

The photo above shows Col Joye and me



in the studios of 4MB Maryborough in the early 1960s with the winner of competition. Col Joye told me that he had just returned from entertaining the Australian soldiers in Vietnam. He said that there were advertising signs in the streets "Col. Joye is coming." Col said all the American soldiers were asking "Who is this Colonel Joye?"

Colin Jacobsen, known professionally as Col Joye, had enormous success in Australia in the early days of rock and roll with his band the Joy Boys.

He started his music career in his brother Kevin Jacobsen's band, The KJ Quintet, in Sydney in 1957.

They impulsively changed their name to Col Joye and the Joy Boys to secure a gig at the Manly Jazzerama and joined by younger brother Keith on bass, the Joy Boys began performing regularly in Bankstown.

In 1959 their second single, *Bye Bye Baby* made the top spot on the Sydney charts and three further top 10 hits followed.

Along with his brother Kevin, in the 1960s Joye also established an influential management, publishing and recording

business.

Joye saw the Bee Gees in Surfers Paradise in 1961 and signed them to Joye Music, with the Gibb brothers performing backing vocals on Joye's hit single *Starlight of Love* in 1963.

In 1973, his single *Heaven Is My Woman's Love* became a national number one.

On 29th November Australian performer, Toni Lamond, died aged 93 after an extensive career in cabaret, theatre, film and television.

Her many accolades include Logie Awards, Mo Awards and the JC Williamson Lifetime Achievement Award.

In 2003, she was made a Member of the Order of Australia for her service to the entertainment industry.

During her career, she starred in numerous Australian theatre productions, including *Oliver!*, *Annie Get Your Gun* and *My Fair Lady*.

Her film and TV credits include *Number 96*, *The Pirates of Penzance* and *Razzle Dazzle*.

She was often a guest on variety and talk shows, including *The Graham Kennedy Show*, *The Mike Walsh Show*, *The Bert Newton Show* and *Good Morning Australia*.

John Laws dies one year after retiring

JOHN Laws was known as the 'Golden Tonsils' and was one of Australia's most recognisable voices in talk-back radio.

He died peacefully at his home in the inner-Sydney suburb of Woolloomooloo in early November, aged 90.

His family said in a statement, "While fame and prominence had become a mainstay of his life, for us he was always the person who meant so much, away from the microphone, the cameras, and the headlines. It is comforting to know that John's was a life lived well — he had remained in good health and even better spirits right up until the last few weeks."

He spent a mammoth 71 years on air at stations such as Sydney's 2UE and 2SM, before retiring in November 2024.

It all began in 1953, when Laws landed his first job in radio at 3BO in Bendigo.

Make a splash at the new \$89.6 million Aquatic Centre

MAYOR Helen Blackburn said the opening of the new \$89.6 million Bundaberg Aquatic Centre marked a major milestone for the region.

"From the many wonderful accessibility features and the ample space for exercising, training or just having fun, this centre is designed for everyone," the Mayor said.

Almost 600 lucky community members were able to take part in free, guided tours of the facility ahead of the official opening, giving the community an exclusive sneak peek behind the scenes.

Many tour participants were thrilled by what they saw.

Pamela Croft was one such local who said she was excited to use the accessibility features and spend time with her family at the new facility.

"I think it is brilliant. I don't live far from here so I have been watching it grow and grow," Pamela said.

"Now that I am having a look, it is spectacular! I can't wait to do water aerobics in a warm pool.

"To be disabled - to have all of that dis-

ability stuff is fantastic. I can't wait to bring my grandchildren here, they are going to love it too. I think it is brilliant for everyone in the family."

Fellow tour attendee Coral Walker shared in the excitement. "I love that it caters for everybody," Coral said. "I really love the surroundings, the trees... I love it all. I will be coming here with my grandchildren."



Bundaberg Mayor, Helen Blackburn.



Bundaberg's new \$89.6 million Aquatic Centre is now open.

THE Bundy LOCAL

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Some photos in this edition kindly supplied by Tourism and Events Queensland.



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Charged man refused bail

A MAN charged in connection to the alleged murder of a teenager who disappeared after a purported car trip to Bundaberg airport has been refused bail.

Kieran Daniel Mittelheuser, 30, has been charged with two counts of accessory after the fact to the alleged murder of Pheobe Bishop and one count of attempting to pervert justice.

The 17-year-old was allegedly murdered by her Gin Gin flatmates Tanika Bromley, 33, and James Wood, 34 mid year 2025.

Phoebe vanished after she was supposed to be dropped at Bundaberg Airport for a flight to Western Australia May 15, but failed to board the flight, police say.

Police allege Pheobe was killed, her body transported in a grey Hyundai, and moved twice before being buried in remote national parkland, it has been reported previously.

Her remains were found in Good Night Scrub National Park on June 6

Mittelheuser, 30, applied for bail in Brisbane Supreme Court this week. He is also charged with fraud – dishonest application of property of another on May 15, possessing dangerous drugs on May 19, breaching bail on June 9, failure to appear in accordance with an undertaking on June 23, contravene direction or requirement police officer in November last year and two counts of driving without a licence disqualified by a court order on May 19. He is not accused of murdering Pheobe.

As previously reported, police will allege Mittelheuser interfered with the police investigation by accessing Pheobe's mobile phone in the days after she was reported missing.

Bundaberg Magistrates Court has heard Mittelheuser's fraud charge is related to the accessory after the fact charges. The Bundaberg court was told the fraud charge involved the alleged use of a credit or debit card that is also relevant to the accessory allegations.

Wood and Bromley are each charged with one count of murder and interfering with a corpse.

Wilful damage, Bundaberg Central

BUNDABERG Police are appealing to the public for information relating to a wilful damage offence that occurred in late November.

Police will allege that at approximately 3am on Friday 28 November, an offender used an implement to damage the windows of a government building on the corner of Woongarra and Tantitha Streets, Bundaberg Central.

Police ramp up patrols

POLICE say they are continuing to increase patrols in the Bundaberg CBD and surrounding areas. Operation Xray Koa follows recent community concerns about anti-social behaviour and property crime. Officers from across the Wide Bay Burnett District are working to maintain a visible presence and prevent offending, as well as supporting community confidence. Police recently charged nine people on 22 charges including stealing, wilful damage, and breach of bail.

E-mobility device deaths

THE Queensland Police Service (QPS) is urging road users to drive safely, adhere to the road rules and remember that every vehicle carries someone's child, parent, sibling or friend.

So far this year, 269 lives have tragically been lost on Queensland roads – 9 more than the same time last year (figures as of 13 November).

Of these fatal crashes, 12 people lost their lives in crashes involving E-Mobility devices.

Beyond these devastating losses, more than 7,500 people have been seriously injured this year due to traffic incidents on Queensland roads.

Acting Chief Superintendent of Road Policing Group, Steve Newland, said even one life lost is one too many.

"When we discuss lives lost on our roads, we must remember these aren't just numbers – they are people, of all ages, who are loved deeply, and whose absence is felt everyday," A/Chief Superintendent Newland said.

Police are reminding motorists that road safety is everyone's responsibility.

Data shows that serious crashes can be significantly reduced when drivers recognise and avoid the 'Fatal Five' behaviours: speeding, drink and drug driving, not wearing seatbelts, fatigue and distraction. **If you have information for police, contact Policelink by providing information using the online suspicious activity form 24 hours per day at www.police.qld.gov.au/reporting or call 131 444. Report crime information anonymously via Crime Stoppers. Call 1800 333 000 or report online at www.crimestoppersqld.com.au.**

Volunteer drivers hit with costly new rules at Bundaberg Botanic Gardens



Do the rules apply to all trains on rail lines?

By Mellissa Harney

THE beloved sugarcane train that winds through the Bundaberg Botanic Gardens is being squeezed by new national rail-safety health standards, leaving its all-volunteer crew facing costly medical tests, long delays and in some cases, unexpected bills for sleep-apnoea machines.

The Australian Sugar Cane Railway (ASCR), operated entirely by the volunteer members of the Bundaberg Steam Tramway Preservation Society (BSTPS), is warning that the new requirements introduced late last year, are putting heavy strain on the small group.

Treasurer Gary Williams said the volunteers had no choice but to comply after a new edition of the National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers came into force on 11 November 2024. Under the rules, only Authorised Health Professionals trained under the new system can carry out the assessments, dramatically increasing the cost.

"We've spent \$13,000 on full rail-safety medicals, including the STOP-BANG tests just to keep our drivers certified," Mr Williams said. "That's a huge amount for a volunteer-run organisation."

Although the Society covered the main round of medical screening, several members were forced to buy their own sleep-apnoea machines after being flagged during assessment, an unexpected cost for volunteers who receive no wages.

One driver spent five months and \$1,400

working through the new assessment requirements before he was allowed back in the driver's seat.

Mr Williams said part of the problem is the design of the STOP-BANG screening tool, which can trigger compulsory specialist reviews, meaning higher costs and long waits, based on simple demographic questions.

"If you answer yes to things like: *Are you male? Are you over 50? Do you take any medication?* that's three strikes," he said. "And once you hit three, you're sent to a specialist."

The ASCR is a cherished Bundaberg attraction, operating inside the Botanic Gardens most Wednesdays and Sundays, as well as public holidays. During Queensland school holidays, services run four days a week between 9am and 3pm.

Heritage and tourist railways across Australia have warned that the revised 2024 Standard, although designed to improve national rail safety, does not distinguish between large commercial rail operators and tiny community-run attractions staffed by retirees and volunteers.

Mr Williams said the Society is committed to meeting the rules. However, warned regulators, the impact on volunteer groups is real, with some similar operations already closing and ticket prices potentially rising by 25 per cent to keep the service running.

"We support safety. Safety is everything in rail," he said. "But the cost and time burden is becoming really tough on small groups like ours."

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Christmas trees spring up at Ban Ban Springs

A NEW Christmas tradition is taking shape in North Burnett, with Ban Ban Springs now home to its very own Christmas tree farm.

Jess Randall of Lava Valley Produce, near Biggenden, has expanded her family's avocado business to include Monterey and Radiata pine trees.

Jess and her husband grow Hass and Gem avocados and three years ago she decided to try her hand at growing Christmas trees. This year will mark their first harvest.

The inspiration for the project came to Jess after listening to an ABC radio segment about a Christmas tree farm in the Atherton Tablelands while she was tending to her family's orchard.

"I thought, 'I'd love to have that kind of experience here' and if I did, I was pretty sure others would feel the same way too," Jess said. "We had the machinery, the land and the will to give it a go and that is 80% the battle."

Jess has many fond childhood memories of hunting for the perfect tree on her family farm which she said involved a lot of debating, bartering and passionate reasoning over which was the best tree.

"Now, with the Christmas tree farm, I can continue that tradition, only with better trees that truly embody Christmas just as much as the turkey or ham does," said Jess.

Growing Christmas trees is no small under-

taking, Monterey and Radiata pines require years of shaping, pruning and careful maintenance. According to Jess Christmas trees are not something that can be rushed and sometimes mother nature will have her say. Despite the challenges, the reward comes when families walk through the orchard to select the tree that will take pride of place in their home.

"Seeing families walk through the orchard, finding their perfect tree and knowing it'll be the centrepiece of their Christmas morning that will be pretty special, said Jess.

According to her there is no comparison between a real tree and a fake one. A real tree brings the scent, the texture and the tradition you can't get from plastic. Each tree is unique, biodegradable and buying local supports regional growers.

"Choosing a real tree also builds family traditions, its about the experience, getting outdoors, picking the perfect one together and making memories that last far longer than the tree itself"

Families visiting the Ban Ban Springs Christmas Tree Farm can stroll through the orchard choose a tree and have it cut and wrapped on-site. Prices start at \$120, and bookings are available via the Crikey It's Christmas Trees Facebook and Instagram pages. Email xmastrees@lavevalleyproduce.com.au for any enquiries.



Jess Randall of Lava Valley Produce, near Biggenden and her first Christmas trees.



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EARLY LEARNING

Oldest Primary School in Bundaberg celebrates its 150th Anniversary

BUNDABERG North State School celebrated its 150th anniversary on Saturday, September 13, with a community fete and open day.

Festivities began with an official opening ceremony, where students both past and present shared reflections on the school's rich history.

Those in attendance enjoyed a High Tea, rides and games, explored a "Walk through the ages" display, browsed fete stalls and were treated to combined instrumental performances by students from both Bundaberg North State School and Bundaberg North State High School.

The highlight of the day was the unveiling of a commemorative garden, featuring

engraved bricks purchased by families, staff and former students as part of the school's "Buy a Brick" initiative. The personalised bricks, created in the lead-up to the anniversary, form the garden's pathways and stand as a lasting tribute to the school's 150-year legacy.

Officially opened in 1875, Bundaberg North State School is the oldest primary school in Bundaberg. It has served the Bundaberg community for generations and will hopefully continue to do so for many years to come.

Photos from the day and memories shared by past students and staff can be found on *Bundaberg North State School 150th Anniversary* Facebook page.



This visit to the school brought back memories for Graeme Sorenson, Keith Sorenson who was a pupil in 1940, Rodney Dick, Ruane Cassidy (nee Dick) and Roslyn Williamson (nee Dick).



Back in 1966 Arthur Begeda started teaching at North Primary and spent 11 years there. He said that the children loved their sport and he was involved in all sporting activities. Arthur pictured at the anniversary with his wife Dorothy later taught at Walkervale, West School, Avondale and Branyan where he was Principal.



Two former pupils, Len Emerick who lived in North Bundaberg and class mate Bob Stitt of Bingera.



Julia and (former Principal) Michael Delaney.



One of the speakers at the Anniversary Celebrations was Michael Delaney. During his time as Principal at North he found the local community, staff and children were "Great!" He said that Bert Hinkler was a pupil at the school and Australian cricketer Don Tallon who played 21 test matches as a wicket keeper for Australia was also a pupil. Michael is pictured with two of Don's daughters Cathie and Jane.

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The experience of a lifetime for one local family

JOHN Harris and his wife Elizabeth unexpectedly had the experience of a lifetime on their trip to Sydney last school holidays.

John, a Bundaberg school teacher, travelled to Sydney to visit his son Patrick and Patrick's partner Phoebe, and ended up joining them for the world-famous Bridge Climb of the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

The group did the twilight Summit Climb, a shortened version that takes visitors halfway across the bridge, ascending to the summit and returning the same way.

The Sydney Harbour Bridge is the largest steel arched bridge in the world, it rises 134 metres above sea level at its peak. Reaching the summit proved unforgettable.

"It wasn't as scary as you would think," said John, "You're tethered the whole way, and they even give you a practice ladder before you start."

He described the physical challenge as 'medium level' explaining that anyone that walks regularly would manage comfortably. The ladders he added weren't the intimidating kind found on rooftops or construction sites. "They've got small steps and there's always someone there to help."

At the top, twilight settled over the city, two enormous flags fluttered in the wind and seagulls circled overhead.

"The view was fantastic," said John, "You look straight across to the Opera House."

For him that sight was especially moving. John's late father worked as a carpenter on the construction of the Sydney Opera House and once took John inside its roof when he was child.

"Looking at it reminded me of my father," said John

Bridge Climb Sydney is an integral part of Sydney's tourism industry. Since 1998 more than 4.5 million people have scaled the arches of the iconic landmark. John said that groups are capped at 14 people, a weather-proof suit is supplied, everyone undergoes a breath test and metal detector screening and climbers can't bring anything loose including watches or phones. A rescue team always remains on standby, and water fountains are placed along the route because water bottles aren't allowed.

Over the years, hundreds of well-known figures from Oprah Winfrey, Nicole Kidman to Prince Harry and Usain Bolt have completed the world-famous climb. Among the Harris family's group were visitors from Brazil, the United States and across Australia.

According to Bridge Climb Sydney, prices vary across days and times depending on demand. John and his family each paid around \$280 for the experience. It is recommended to book in advance to secure the best deal.

Despite having travelled widely, John said Sydney's Harbour remains unmatched.

"Hong Kong Harbour is beautiful at night, but Sydney Harbour is one of the best in the world."

Climbing the Sydney Harbour Bridge was in every sense the experience of a lifetime for John and his family, a memory he won't soon forget. John would recommend the experience to anyone visiting Sydney.



A birds eye view of Sydney from the top of the Harbour Bridge. John Harris and wife Elizabeth with their son Patrick Harris and his girlfriend Phoebe.

Chess continues to grow in popularity across Bundaberg

BUNDABERG'S annual Children's Chess Tournament was held in October. Hosted by Avoca State School, the interschool event attracted 170 students aged between six and seventeen years. Participants represented schools from Gladstone to the Fraser Coast and included a number of home-schooled children.

In the primary school division, Avoca State School claimed first place following their recent third place finish of Regional Schools at Gardiner Chess competition. They were closely followed by two teams from St Luke's Bundaberg. In the senior's division, Bundaberg State High School were worthy winners, continuing their success as the Top Regional Team at Gardiner Chess. Bundaberg Christian Collage and St Lukes Bundaberg also delivered strong performances.

According to Martin Carter of the Bundaberg Chess Club, the game continues to grow in popularity across Bundaberg with increased interest from both students and teachers.

"Our club members do coaching ses-



sions in schools," said Mr Carter.

For those interested in getting involved, the Bundaberg Chess Club offers plenty of opportunities to play and learn. For more information on upcoming events or to get involved with the Bundaberg Chess Club visit www.bundabergchessclub.com.au

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Respect more, care more: Moorhead's call for a kinder 2026

By Mellissa Harney

It has been a remarkable year for Bundaberg property developer Bill Moorhead, who was named Bundaberg Region Citizen of the Year 2025 in January and has since continued to contribute significantly to the community.

Mayor Helen Blackburn said Mr Moorhead has created more residential blocks in Bundaberg than anyone else, giving countless families a place to call home. Beyond development, he is an avid bird watcher, a long-time supporter of local AFL, co-founder of the Bundaberg Business Lunch for the Salvation Army's Red Shield Appeal, and a steady backer of grassroots organisations across the region.

New Memorial Garden

His latest achievement is deeply personal. Charlotte's Wood, a memorial garden and art trail at Headlands Estate, honours his daughter Charlotte, who passed from leukaemia at just seven and a half years old.

The garden features winding pathways, reflection seats, vibrant plantings and mosaics created from Charlotte's drawings and inspired by the local Yule'laa butterfly.

Artists Paul D Perry, Lew Rehben and Tani Bates helped bring the vision to life, with a soft opening in November 2025 that included a community mosaic workshop.

The first path into Charlotte's Wood is something special for the whole region. There will be a concrete multi-modal path

meandering through the Woods, linking with other paths to make a circuit of some 5km, which just happens to be the distance required for a Park Run!



There will be connected paths with views of all four lake networks.

The park will incorporate half of the Old Quarry an area of about 125 acres. There will be connected paths with views of all four lake networks. Bill said they will be planting close to 100,000 local native trees in what is currently a fairly barren landscape.

Once completed Bill intends to donate

the wonderland to the people of Bundaberg at no cost. Charlottes Wood is located between Headland Estate and Innes Park near Logan Road.

Bill Moorhead is also a proud father of Dr William Moorhead, who recently commenced a new role as a Staff Specialist in Medical Oncology at Ipswich Hospital after many years of study and registrar training across Queensland. Caring for people with cancer and supporting their families is "a great privilege," he said, work made deeply meaningful by the childhood leukaemia diagnosis and tragic loss of his older sister Charlotte.

"I've had wonderful influences in my life," Dr Moorhead said. "My mum, Jackie, a retired nurse, helped shape me into a caring clinician and strong communicator. And my dad, Bill, always encouraged me to pursue my goals and get stuff done. I'm incredibly proud of him."

He added that his father's passion for community-building and sustainability, particularly through the Headlands Estate development, continues to inspire him. The opening of Charlotte's Wood, he said, represents the culmination of that vision, "a meaningful tribute to my late sister, who I believe would have grown up to be a conservationist."

Looking ahead, Mr Moorhead hopes for a kinder, more connected 2026.

"I wish everyone could respect more and genuinely care more about each other; the environment; the community including

Government; our awesome local Taribelang Bunda mob and the Arts," he said. "If everyone gave a bit more than they took, the whole community benefits. Smile more; whinge less."

From heartfelt memorials to environmental restoration, Bill Moorhead's legacy continues to help shape a stronger, more compassionate Bundaberg region.



Bill Moorhead with his son Dr William Moorhead, who recently commenced a new role as a Staff Specialist in Medical Oncology at Ipswich Hospital. (Photo by Jane McRae.)



A mosaic tiles tribute designed by local artists welcomes guests to Charlotte's Wood.

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The Deli to open fourth location at Bundaberg's new Aquatic Centre

A MUCH-LOVED local café is expanding again, with The Deli set to open its fourth Bundaberg location at the new Bundaberg Aquatic Centre. The social-enterprise café already operates at Targo Street, Bundaberg Airport and CQUniversity Bundaberg, and will now bring its signature healthy options and community-driven mission to one of the region's newest public facilities.

The Deli has built a strong following since launching in 2019, known for its brunch favourites, crazy cob loaf creations, gourmet meats and cheeses, and a quirky menu built around delicious, locally sourced ingredients. But what truly sets it apart is its purpose: providing real, paid employment for people with disabilities in an industry where they are too often overlooked.

At every Deli location, staff are trained to industry standards, supported to build their skills, and encouraged to shine in a workplace that values their potential. Customers don't just walk away with a BLT or takeaway coffee; they help create genuine job opportunities and a sense of pride and purpose for every team member.

The new Aquatic Centre café will introduce the same heart-driven approach, offering fresh, healthy meals designed for active families and swimmers, while still celebrating local favourites.

With Head Chef Ashton and Deli Manager Hayley leading the way, the newest location promises to serve up food made with care, flair and plenty of Bundaberg pride.



Kevin Hill of Bundaberg and Bargara wild life photographer known as Jimmy Scaboo, takes time off to enjoy a Devonshire tea/coffee on the veranda of the 90 year old Courthouse Gallery in the main street of Gin Gin. There is a gift shop, history room and two art galleries which showcase local and travelling exhibitions.



Having a chat about St Lukes School in Bundaberg are Kath and Graeme Kirkpatrick with Jane McRae. Graeme and his family arrived in Bundaberg and after gaining a wealth of experience at John Paul College in Brisbane. He was the foundation Head of Junior School at St Lukes. His first task was to establish a Prep to Year 6 Primary Campus. When Graeme Kirkpatrick departed in 2001, he left behind not only buildings and programmes, but a legacy that lives on in the spirit of the school.

Ring in the New Year at Kelly's

KELLY'S at Burnett Heads, is the kind of place where the ocean breeze mingles with the aroma of fresh coffee, making every visit feel like a holiday.

This New Year's Eve, Wednesday 31st December, the café is turning up the cheer with a special dinner starting at 4:30pm. Locals are already whispering about gathering friends, raising glasses, and welcoming midnight with laughter.

Kelly's invites you to make up a party, bring your appetite, and let the seaside spirit carry you into 2025.

Bookings are easy – just call 4348 3593 and join the celebration.

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THE BundyBook

TOURIST GUIDE

The Bundy Book was first published 30 years ago and since then over one million copies have been printed and read by visitors to this region.

The turtles are here

Mon Repos is home to an ancient breeding cycle, dating back 220 million years to the Triassic Period.

Witness the majestic sea turtle swim to shore to lay her precious eggs. Two months later, her blinking hatchlings emerge from their shells to make the perilous journey out to sea.

Mon Repos not only supports the largest concentration of nesting marine turtles on the eastern Australian mainland – it also has the largest nesting population of endangered loggerhead turtles in the South Pacific. QPWS rangers are critical to their ongoing survival.

Mon Repos Turtle Encounters operates guided, night-

ly tours to witness these nestings (November to January) and hatchings (January to March).

Turtle Encounters is very popular so bookings are essential.

Tickets should be pre-booked and prepaid online at the Bundaberg, Childers or Gin Gin Visitor Information Centres, go to www.bundabergregion.org or phone 1300 722 099

Remember to call first to check for availability if you are travelling to Bundaberg on a day trip.

For ticket prices and visiting times, go to Book Turtle Encounter Tour www.parks.qld.gov.au



MUST SEE BUNDY

A perfect mix of nature, history, and local flavour

HERE are the must-see attractions and experiences visitors to the Bundaberg Region can experience and enjoy.



Bundaberg Rum Distillery – Tour the working distillery, museum, and sample the iconic Aussie spirit.

Head to the Rum Distillery in East Bundaberg and learn secrets of our Australian Tourism Award winner for Best Distilleries and Breweries. See behind the scenes processes that make this iconic beverage. The first batch of Bundy Rum was produced in 1889 and the distillery has survived two devastating fires. Situated in East Bundaberg.

Continued over page.



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MUST SEE BUNDABERG REGION

From previous page.

Bundaberg Barrel (Bundaberg Brewed Drinks) – Discover how Bundy Ginger Beer is made and taste test the full range.

Ginger Beer: Your chance to learn about this world famous drink

Bundaberg Brewed Drinks at The Barrel, the eye-catching landmark on Bargara Road is where to learn how it's made, its origins, ingredients, bottling and packaging.

To book a tasting call the team on 4154 5480 or book online at bundabergbarrel.com

Hinkler House – how he flew, where he lived

Hinkler Hall of Aviation (Bundaberg Botanic Gardens) – Fascinating tribute to pioneer aviator Bert Hinkler, born in Bundy.

This amazing visitor experience operated by Bundaberg Regional Council is an outstanding example of communities working together to celebrate and honour the life and pioneering efforts of Bundaberg's own aviation pioneer, Bert Hinkler.

See his favourite "Avro Baby" returned to its right home from the Queensland Museum, original documents, photos, memorabilia and multi-media exhibits. It's in North Bundaberg in the Botanic Gardens.

"Flight ever fascinated me," said Bert who always spelled 'Aviation' with a capital 'A' as a little boy at North Bundaberg State School.

Your entry ticket to Hinkler Hall of Aviation includes admission to the magnificently restored Hinkler House which Bert named Mon Repos after the beach where he practised flying.

In 1983 Bert's house was brought brick by brick from Southampton in England to stand proudly in the Botanic Gardens.

Fairymead House Sugar Museum – Exploring the history of sugarcane

This was a bicentennial gift from the Bundaberg Sugar Company and now overlooks the Botanic Gardens in its role of sugar industry museum, housing photographs and memorabilia exploring the technology, development and history of milling.

Fairymead House and surrounding gardens are popular for functions and weddings. Phone 4130 4400.

Bundaberg Historical Museum – Step back in time

Beautifully maintained in the Botanic Gardens, this quaint haven of nostalgia has the famous Lucke Quads' pram here, the only one of its kind made in Australia.

Also re-created is an old schoolroom, butcher shop, general store, bank office, hospital (with iron lung) milk cart with horse, even a jail.

Open 10am to 4pm. Phone 4152 0101

Have a steam train ride in Bundaberg

The Little Train chuffs happily along its track through the Botanic Gardens, taking delighted children and the young at heart on a steam-powered journey.

Operated by a dedicated group of volunteers from the Bundaberg Steam Tramway Preservation Society, the steam train runs Wednesdays and Sundays all year and in the Queensland school holidays the diesel on Tuesday and Friday as well.

Phone 4152 6609 or visit the railway station while at the Gardens.

www.bundabergcanetrains.org.au



Lady Elliot Island.

Alexandra Park & Zoo

The Zoo is home to a delightful menagerie with exhibits including freshwater turtles, wallabies, emus, dingoes, native bees, Australian parrots, Cotton Top Tamarins, snakes, lizards and the latest addition of six green tree frogs, happy in their frog friendly home.

Alexandra Park in Quay Street west of the railway line is a spacious shady space with picnic tables, barbecues, playground and gazebo; take a stroll down to the Riverside Boardwalk.

Mystery Craters – Can you solve the mystery?

See a vast expanse of mysterious craters their origins unknown, dotting the landscape like lunar terrain. Tours reveal fascinating insights and ancient myths that leave experts astounded. Mystery Craters are at South Kolan, phone 4157 7291.

Nature and Wildlife

Mon Repos Turtle Centre (Mon Repos Beach) – See endangered loggerhead turtles nesting and hatching (Nov–Mar). The turtles timelines are November through to when the hatchlings emerge up to March. Mon Repos Turtle Centre is open all year round for daytime experiences for you to learn about the special journey turtles and people have taken at Mon Repos, the whole family will enjoy a visit. For information phone 1300 722 099.

Visit the Great Barrier Reef

Lady Musgrave Island & Lagoon – Snorkel the southern Great Barrier Reef, teeming with coral and marine life.

Lady Elliot Island – A coral cay known for crystal-clear water, manta rays, and eco-resort stays.

Adventures

Taribelang Bunda Cultural Tours

For more than 60,000 years the Taribelang people have lived on country in this region.

You can immerse yourself in a journey, guided by Elders past and present, with Taribelang Tours and discover this region's rich aboriginal culture and history.

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Spliters Farm

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Information and bookings at www.splitersfarm.com.au

The Hummock Lookout – A volcanic remnant offering panoramic views of Bundaberg's farms and coastline.

The Burnett River Sunset Cruise is a 2 hour luxury catamaran experience in Bundaberg, featuring live music, grazing platters, and stunning river views.

This is a relaxing evening outing where guests enjoy the golden glow of sunset while learning about the river's history.

On the way you will see Bundaberg Rum Distillery, Bulk Sugar Terminal, and tranquil upper reaches of the Burnett River.



Mon Repos Turtle Centre.

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A DROVER in Australia is a person, typically an experienced stockman, who moves livestock, usually sheep, cattle, and horses "on the hoof" over long distances.

Reasons for droving may include: delivering animals to a new owner's property, taking animals to market, or moving animals during a drought in search of better feed and/or water or in search of a yard to work on the livestock.

Moving a small mob of quiet cattle is

relatively easy, but moving several hundreds or thousands head of wild station cattle over long distances is a very different matter.

The Drovers Camp at Camooweal is open daily for visitors May to September 9 to 3 and is well worth visiting.

Bush camping is available, phone 07 4748 2022.

Situated east of Camooweal on the Northern Side of the Barkly Highway. www.droverscamp.com.au

An island escape close to Brisbane

NORTH Stradbroke Island, Minjerribah, sits just off the coast of Brisbane and is one of Queensland's most stunning and accessible island escapes.

Getting there is as easy as a short drive or train/bus ride from Brisbane City, followed by a 25 minute water taxi or vehicle ferry.

The Island has a lot to offer. From rocky headlands with unforgettable views to freshwater lakes and pristine sandy beaches.

Visitors can explore scenic walking trails, dive rocky reefs, see wildlife up close, taste local produce, learn about the island's rich Indigenous heritage and much more.

North Stradbroke is one of the best land-based places on Australia's east coast to spot whales. From May to November an estimated 40,000 plus whales pass the island

each year as they migrate north. It's truly magical to experience.

Whether you like swimming, surfing, spotting wildlife or enjoying a nice meal with a view, there is something for everyone at North Stradbroke Island. It's a place everyone should have on their bucket list.

What's On

Straddie Salute Triathlon:

Friday 15th May & Sunday 17th May 2026

Stradbroke Chamber Music Festival:

Friday 17th July to Sunday 19th July 2026

Quandamooka Festival 2026:

29 August - Sunday 30 August 2026

Point Lookout Markets:

Held every second Sunday at Point Lookout Bowls Club.

Explore Western Queensland in comfort

HERE'S a great opportunity to visit Western Queensland by coach with Greg Ross and 12 Country, Rock and Roll and Comedy entertainers on board.

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The tour cost of \$3800 per person covers bus travel, bed, breakfast, entertainment and nightly meals.

You leave on 21 September and return on 1 October 2026.

Phone G and D Ross Bus Charters now for more details or to reserve a seat. Phone 4129 7132.



Qantas museum.

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Bus, Bed, Breakfast, Nightly Meals & Entertainment

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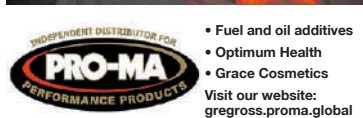
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is located in the best position on North Stradbroke Island to see whales breach and manta rays right from your balcony.

The Manta Rays can be seen from November to April and are also visible at the famous dive site, Manta Bommie, which is the second most important Manta gathering site in Australia.

Just a 5-minute walk from our resort, humpback whales swim incredibly close to shore, often 50-100 metres from the cliffs. During migration (May-October), they rest and play.

The resort is close to local cafés, restaurants, the Whale Tail Gelato Shop and North Stradbroke Island Beach Hotel.



'Catch the Whale Wave from your Balcony' Migration Magic

Book 4+ nights and SAVE \$200

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Available for bookings until 18/12/26 excluding public holidays, April & September School Holidays.

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www.whalewatchresort.com.au

Agnes Blues Roots and Rock Festival back in February

ROCKING out from 20-22 February 2026 at the SES Grounds, Seventeen Seventy, the festival will feature nearly 40 live acts across two stages plus four free workshops, food and beverage trucks, markets and a full weekend of coastal rhythm.

Highlights include: 19-Twenty, The Honey Badgers, Doc Halibut, The Urban Chiefs, Matty Rogers Band, Somerset Barnard, Minnie Marks, Kissing the Flint, Olivia Ruth, Sugarbag Blonde, Ruby Mills, Mitch King and legendary rockers and headliners Dragon.

Festival President Amber Rodgers says the event captures the spirit of the Discovery Coast. "There's something magical about this festival. It's intimate, it's coastal, and it's powered by locals who genuinely love live music. It's three incredible days of music, sun and soul in paradise and it's the weekend we all wait for," she said.

TICKETS:
Discounted 3-day passes for \$189 pp now on sale until Sunday 4 January 2026.

BOOK NOW:
www.agnesbluesandroots.com.au/tickets



Intriguing Australian rock group Owls of Neptune hails from the Sunshine Coast. They have carved out a separate, unique place in the Australian music landscape with their distinctive, genre-blending sounds.

Queensland students swap textbooks for snorkels



Exploring the coral reefs surrounding Lady Musgrave Island.

QUEENSLAND students are set to trade classrooms for coral reefs in 2026, following the launch of a ground-breaking new education program on the Southern Great Barrier Reef.

The 1770 Reef Discoveries Education Program, developed by Kangaroo Bus Lines in partnership with Dive Spear and Sport 1770, takes Year 6 and Year 9 students on a five-day learning adventure to the Town of 1770 and Lady Musgrave Island.

During the program students will explore reef ecology, conservation and local history. From the historic 1770 landing of James Cook to the region's role in modern reef science.

Students will also earn SDI snorkelling certification and take part in citizen science reef monitoring, collecting real world data on coral health.

Lady Musgrave Island, known as the 'Jewel of the Southern Great Barrier Reef,' is

home to vibrant corals, tropical fish, rays and nesting turtles, giving students a rare chance to see the Reef's biodiversity up close.

Discovery Coast Tourism and Commerce General Manager Alistair Tavares has described the program as a game changer.

"By bringing students to 1770, we are not only giving young Queenslanders a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience the history and the Great Barrier Reef, we are also strengthening the local economy in a sustainable way."

The 1770 Reef Discoveries Program runs from March to December and has already attracted strong interest from schools across the state. Rebates of up to \$150 per student, plus free teacher travel, make the program accessible to schools.

Bookings are now open for the 2026 season. For more information visit www.kangaroobuslines.com.au/our-services/schools-education/reef-discoveries-tour/

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Boaties urged to 'cool your jets' this Summer

QUEENSLAND boaties are being urged to take extra care on the water this holiday season, as Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ) launches a six-month statewide safety and compliance campaign.

The message is simple: slow down, keep a proper lookout, and wear your lifejacket.

The campaign will include extra patrols on busy waterways, with a particular focus on personal watercraft (PWC) riders, such as jet skis.

Between 2022 and 2025, 28% of PWC riders intercepted by compliance officers were caught speeding, compared to just 8% of motorboat drivers. With some coastal regions have even higher rates.

On the Gold Coast, almost 40% of intercepted PWC riders were speeding. In Noosa, the figure was 35%.

These behaviours are putting other boat-

ies, swimmers, and families at risk, MSQ warns.

"Too often we're seeing jet skis and tinies weaving through busy waterways at high speed," said MSQ General Manager Kell Dillon. "This behaviour is dangerous, deliberate and unacceptable."

The campaign also reinforces the importance of lifejackets. New laws introduced in December 2024 require lifejackets to be worn in high-risk situations, and marine officers will be checking compliance.

Boaties caught speeding risk an on-the-spot fine starting from \$333.

"We're asking everyone to 'cool your jets' and do the right thing," Mr Dillon said. "Let's make Queensland's waterways safe for everyone." More information on boating safety and lifejacket laws can be found at: www.msq.qld.gov.au

Take a trip to see an historic lighthouse

FANCY being transported back 150 years? The team at 1770 LARC! Tours can create this experience for you on a specialised tour of Queensland's first Lighthouse at Bustard Heads.

Accompanying the Lighthouse are two restored lighthouse keepers cottages, an engine room and a resting place for 12 previous occupants of the station.

Brimming with historical artefacts, maritime treasures, and enough mysteries to sink a ship (literally) it's an experience not to be missed. The amphibian, fondly known as the LARC! is painted a brilliant pink and crosses pristine waterways, travels along the coastline of deserted stretches of sandy beaches to the Bustard Head Light station. Phone 4974 9422.

Bundaberg real estate gets a power boost

Meet Jillian Druitt from Bundy to Beach Properties

Why did you choose to establish your business in the Bundaberg area?

BUNDABERG has always felt like home to me. I was born in Maryborough and spent my first 18 years growing up here while my father worked as the Bundaberg District Valuer of the Valuer Generals Department for 12 years and my mother taught at a local primary school.

I attended Avoca Primary and Bundaberg State High, rowed on the Burnett River, and worked part-time at John Neilson's Chemists before moving to Brisbane to study.

Over the years, I returned regularly to visit my parents, and the sense of community, friendships, beaches and life-style here never stopped drawing me back.

Ultimately, choosing to establish my business in Bundaberg was about reconnecting with my roots, being close to family, returning and contributing to a community I've always loved.

What sets your agency apart from others in the area?

WHAT sets my agency apart is the combination of deep local insight and high-level fierce negotiation skills. After 14 years' experience listing properties in Brisbane's fast paced, competitive and ever-changing market, I bring a refined, strategic approach to every sale — but with the personalised service and positive experience that every client deserves.

Having bought and sold properties myself, I know how stressful the process can be and understand the frustrations that sometimes come with dealing with agents. I see every sale as a journey, not just a transaction, and I take the time to guide clients through each step with clarity, honesty, and genuine care.

Through my years of experience and networking I have developed a valuable network of interstate buyer agents who have introduced my listings to cash, unconditional buyers with substantial purchasing power. Auction campaigns are also a skill I have developed under the close guidance of one of our country's best auctioneers Phillip Parker who has conducted over 50,000 auctions.

Presentation, performance, communication and extensive experience in the market and the skill of negotiating, should be the primary focus when putting one of your biggest assets — your home, in the hands of an agent to market.

What types of properties do you specialise in?

NEARING to 1,000 property sales, my experience spans residential homes, rural acreage, inner-city apartments, developments and land releases, giving me the versatility to handle a wide range of property transactions with confidence.

I have had the privilege of working with some of the best industry leaders including Sonya Treloar of Ray White Compass Group, one of the Nation's most successful agents for the last 4 years. Sonya and her husband Wayne are both highly respected business leaders in the industry.

I have gained priceless knowledge through the coaching of Sonya and Wayne, which has been instrumental in shaping my approach to selling all facets of real estate and has predominantly led to my own striving success within the industry.

How do you describe the current real estate climate in our region?

THE current real estate climate in the Bundaberg region is increasingly positive. There is strong buyer interest, particularly from people relocating from southern states—a trend that has continued in the wake of COVID-19.

Approximately one in every five buyers is moving here to enjoy our beautiful, relaxed environment which includes stunning beaches, picturesque countryside, and excellent recreational opportunities.

The region also boasts strong tourism attractions, including the famous turtle rookeries and its proximity to the Great Barrier Reef, adding to its lifestyle appeal.

Bundaberg is particularly attractive to retirees, as well as golf and fishing enthusiasts. The area also benefits from a growing shopping and commercial sector, providing convenience and supporting local economic growth.

We are seeing an increase in land development and a rising number of new homes being built, reflecting the region's expansion and sustained demand. Combined with Bund-

aberg's community spirit and lifestyle appeal and all of the above, this makes it a great time to buy or sell property in the region.

Do you anticipate any major market shifts in the next year?

THAT'S a great question! Yes — there are a number of potential market shifts that we expect to see in and around Bundaberg over the next 12 months that are worth watching.

Supply is tight but new development is coming with the major surge in subdivision activity. More than 1,500 new house blocks have been proposed in Bundaberg's growth corridors.

The combination of tight existing supply and new development could keep prices supported, but once that pipeline of new homes comes online, it might ease some upward pressure — particularly in the more affordable segments.

The expanded Home Guarantee Scheme from 1 Oct 2025 is already starting to boost first-home buyer activity in Bundaberg, especially for homes in the \$400k - \$700k range.

Bundaberg's long-term population growth and infrastructure investment including the large hospital project, are likely to continue attracting buyers.

As infrastructure improves, this could increase demand in growth suburbs and raise property values in those areas.

Bundaberg's rental vacancy rate is very low around 0.4% which means rental properties are in short supply and this can make the area even more attractive to investors, pushing demand and prices higher, especially for properties that can be rented out or for dual-living setups.

Overall, I expect the median property prices in Bundaberg to grow by 4-6% in 2026.



Jillian Druitt from Bundy to Beach Properties.

How will your business serve or contribute to the local community?

MY business is deeply committed to serving and contributing to the Bundaberg community. As a family-based agency with local roots, I focus on more than just property transactions — I aim to support and enhance the community in meaningful ways.

By providing expert guidance, fair pricing, and transparent advice, I help locals make one of the biggest decisions of their lives with confidence and peace of mind.

Additionally, I will support local families and retirees with accessible, personalised services as well as promoting and working with other local business owners and development projects through partnerships and sponsorships.

Ultimately, my business aims to strengthen Bundaberg's social and economic fabric by helping people settle, invest and thrive in our beautiful region.

DISCLAIMER: The views, opinions, and information expressed in this article are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy, position, or beliefs of any affiliated organizations, employers, or entities. The content is provided for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal, financial, or professional advice.



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We want to say thanks to the volunteers who support our community.

We're giving one lucky volunteer and their family the chance to win three nights' accommodation for four at The Islander Noosa Resort plus a family pass to Aussie World, and dinner or lunch for a family of four at the Royal Mail at nearby Tewantin.

As much as we'd love to send every volunteer on a holiday, we know that isn't possible, so this is our way of saying thank you

to the remarkable work volunteers do in our community. Their dedication keeps Bundaberg strong, connected and supported and this competition is a small gesture of appreciation.

The Islander Noosa Resort: Opposite the Noosa River the resort offers 2 bedroom and 3 bedroom Villas with outstanding facilities including three pools, spas, tennis courts, saunas, BBQ areas, a gym, a games room and more. It's the perfect place for a family vacation.

Aussie World: One of Queensland's top rated family theme parks, Aussie World is an easy drive from Noosa and offers a full day of thrills, rides and entertainment for all ages.

The Royal Mail Hotel: The recently renovated Royal Mail Hotel offers a Beer Garden

overlooking the Noosa River, weekly entertainment, food specials, renovated accommodation, lively bars and gaming – blending coastal charm with classic character."

Entry is free at: coastlinenews.com.au. This competition is only available to Bundaberg volunteers (someone who gives time and skills to an organisation or cause without financial gain). One entry per volunteer.

Entries close 28 February, 2026. The winner will be announced on our website and in the April 2026 edition. Prize must be used before 30 June, 2026 at a time suitable to The Islander Resort.

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Growers gain fresh perspectives with 'Pests, Dirt & Fert.' Study Tour

STEPPING off the farm can be one of the most valuable things a grower can do, offering fresh ideas and a broader view of the industry. That's exactly what a group of Wide Bay Burnett growers experienced during the recent Pests, Dirt & Fert Horticulture Study Tour, which took them through the Scenic Rim, Lockyer Valley and Brisbane to explore innovation, technology and collaboration across the horticulture sector.

The tour kicked off in the Fassifern Valley, where growers met with some of Queensland's leading vegetable producers to discuss cover cropping, integrated pest management and how precision agriculture tools are driving better production outcomes and reducing waste.

For day two participants spent the morning at the Gatton Smart Farm Field Day, experiencing the latest AgTech innovations, including protected cropping systems, digital monitoring tools and field autonomous robotics designed to improve efficiency and sustainability.

The group then visited Foodbank Queensland, one of the most impactful stops on the tour. Foodbank Qld supports more than 135,000 Queenslanders in crisis every week.

The final day began with an early morning visit to the Brisbane Markets, Queensland's central fruit and vegetable

wholesale market, followed by a behind the scenes look at how produce moves through the state's supply chain.

The group then visited Symbio Laboratories, gaining a deeper appreciation for the critical role of testing and quality assurance in maintaining food safety, meeting export standards and ensuring market confidence.

The tour concluded at the University of Queensland's St Lucia campus, where Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation (QAAFI) researchers presented their advanced tissue culture and genetic preservation work aimed at ensuring the sustainability and longevity of horticultural industries.

The BFVG Board has been actively working towards attracting younger generations to become involved in the industry and organisation and we were pleased to have eight people on this tour under the age of 35.

Additionally at the recent Annual General Meeting for BFVG we were pleased to welcome three new Directors from various backgrounds. We also farewelled and thanked Craig van Rooyen who has been involved with the Board since 2011 and Tina McPherson who came on in 2017.

Our new Chair Russell McCrystal is looking forward to working with the Board to deliver our new strategic plan which encompasses more study tours like the Pest

Dirt and Fert trip to connect growers and encourage young people into our industry.

Focus on Rieck Farming

Mick Rieck of Rieck Farming provided key learnings during the Fassifern Valley visits.

Mick Rieck's family business demonstrates the benefits of collaboration and biological soil management. Operating as part of the Kalfresh grower network, Rieck Farming retains independence while leveraging shared logistics, marketing, and research support. Key success factors include:

- Rotating two crops per block annually and using Lucerne as a rest crop for soil recovery and profitability.
- Creative inter-row cover cropping and tactical mechanisation to build soil health and efficiency.
- A strong culture of teamwork and generational knowledge transfer.
- A commitment to biological inputs and continuous improvement to sustain productivity.

A recurring message that resonated with participants was 'keep trying new things and keep learning'. Two of the visitors were Devon and Connor van Rooyen.

Devon said, "The study tour gave me plenty of practical ideas to take back to the farm. I'm keen to follow up on a few things

like gene editing varieties, building up organic matter in the soil and looking more into smart sprayers or even laser weed control.

"What I really enjoyed were the on-farm visits and seeing the different technology in action during the Gatton AgTech Showcase. I look forward to joining future study tours, especially ones that involve practical hands on activities."



Devon and Connor van Rooyen during Rieck Farming tour.

Bundaberg's coastal housing boom brings growth and optimism

BUNDABERG'S coastal corridor is recording one of its strongest periods of residential growth in years, with 18 major developments approved by Bundaberg Regional Council within the past 12 months. The projects account for 3,676 new dwellings, signalling rising confidence in the region's long-term potential.

Most of the approvals are concentrated in the coastal suburbs of Innes Park, Coral Cove and Burnett Heads, where demand for lifestyle-focused housing continues to increase.

Among the headline developments is a \$320 million resort-style community at Coral Cove, featuring 504 homes, a clubhouse and wellness facilities located minutes from the shoreline.

At Burnett Heads, construction has started on the first stage of a 437-home gated community, part of a \$323 million investment targeting retirees relocating from south-east Queensland.

Developers are also contributing to key infrastructure upgrades, including \$3.7 million earmarked for improvements to local roads and wastewater systems.

Council has secured additional state funding, with \$7.7 million allocated toward upgrades at the Millbank Wastewater Treatment Plant to support anticipated population growth.

Economists say the boom reflects Bundaberg's appeal as an affordable coastal alternative, despite the median house price rising to \$600,000, more than doubling over five years.

With more than 40 per cent of the Wide Bay population aged over 55, retirement-focused housing is expected to assist in freeing up established homes for younger buyers.

Local leaders remain optimistic that planned health and community facilities, including the prospect of a new public hospital, will reinforce Bundaberg's position as a growing residential destination.



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Lighthouse Rock returns in 2026

LIGHTHOUSE Presents has confirmed the festival will take place on Saturday, 23 May with Australian rock legend Jimmy Barnes headlining and performing his Working Class Man 40th anniversary show.

Following two sold out festivals in 2022 and 2023, Lighthouse Rock will once again take place at Burnett Heads, the gateway to the Southern Great Barrier Reef.

Icon Jimmy Barnes will share the main stage with Birds of Tokyo, Mental as Anything, Richard Clapton, Ross Wilson, The SuperJesus, Tom Busby, Salt and Steel and the winner of Triple M's Battle of the Bands.

"Look out Bundy, we're coming to Rock!" said Barnes.

A second stage will highlight local talent including Mark Lavender, Keely Ellen, Nathan Bedford, Phoebe Jay and Matt Black.

Gavin Hales from Lighthouse Presents said they were excited to announce the epic line up for the festival and to bring back the biggest name in Australian rock history Jimmy Barnes.



Jimmy Barnes is ready to rock the Lighthouse Rock festival in 2026.

"The addition of Mental as Anything and so many more local acts makes this such a stacked festival that we are certainly proud to showcase," said Hales.

Lighthouse Rock is dedicated to boosting Bundaberg tourism while driving positive change within the community.

It continues to champion local initiatives that benefit the region. In 2026, the festival will again support Great Barrier Reef Legacy, the Living Coral Biobank Project and the work of the Sea Turtle Alliance.

Lighthouse Rock is an all ages event with free entry to children under 10 years and half price tickets available to those aged 11 to 17. Various transport options will be made available to festival goers. To stay informed follow Lighthouse Presents on Facebook and Instagram.

Tickets are available now for purchase through lighthouserock.com.au

All tickets, previously held for Saturday 18 October 2025 will be honoured with the new date.



Gavin Hales, from Lighthouse Presents, is excited to have Jimmy Barnes in Burnett Heads.

Model railways are boosting mental health and building community



By Mellissa Harney

WHAT began as a university assignment to explore something unfamiliar quickly became a journey into creativity, healing, and human connection.

At the 2024 Bundaberg Model Train and Hobby Expo, I expected a nostalgic hobby kept alive by older enthusiasts. Instead, I found a vibrant, multi-generational community brought together by imagination and miniature worlds.

Among them was Maureen, a former station master who credits model railways with saving her life. "Creating, calms something inside me," she shared. "When things upset me, I have an outlet. It helps me to see past the hurt."

Like Maureen, many find therapeutic value in the hobby. Richard, a retiree living in a small studio, discovered z-scale modelling as a way to fill his time and combat loneliness. With limited space, he's crafted layouts in coffee tables and briefcases. "It gives me something to look forward to," he said.

Model railways, it turns out, offer more than intricate tracks and locomotives. They provide connection, purpose, and joy. Will James, a hobbyist-turned-YouTuber, rediscovered trains in his late 20s. Today, he produces professional content for a growing online audience and supports others in the community through clubs, tutorials, and expos.

"There's room for every kind of creativity in this hobby," Will said. "Whether you're into wiring, scenery, 3D printing, storytelling, or just watching trains go by, there's a place for you."

That inclusivity is driving a shift in the demographics of the hobby. Meagan, known online as The Train Girl, turned to model railways during COVID lockdowns and post-natal depression. It became not just a creative outlet, but a small business. Today, she produces detailed Australian dioramas and advocates for greater diversity in the model rail community.

"You don't need to be into trains to get involved," she explained. "Many of my friends do Dungeons & Dragons or home design. Modelling brings us together, it's about the joy of creating and connecting."

Bundaberg occupational therapist Jennifer Ritchie agrees. "Creativity helps people reconnect with who they are," she said. "Model railways tap into so many therapeutic benefits, physical, cognitive, and emotional. It's a meaningful, purpose-driven activity, and that's essential for well-being."

That theory is backed by practice. In Canberra, a partnership between a model railway club, a high school, and a Men's Shed is helping disengaged students develop confidence, practical skills, and communication. The mentoring program has seen students transform, some even finding their voice for the first time.

The Wide Bay Burnett Model Railway Club has announced details for the 2026 Bundaberg Model Train & Hobby Expo to be held on Saturday 21st and Sunday 22nd March, 2026 at the Bundaberg Multiplex Sports & Convention Centre. 1 Civic Avenue, Bundaberg West.

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LOCAL NEWS FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

18 THE BUNDY LOCAL

No travel insurance very risky

AS THE holiday season approaches and international travel picks up, Australians are being reminded of just how essential travel insurance is. While travelling overseas can be exciting, unexpected events can occur at any time and without insurance they can quickly turn into costly financial setbacks.

Bargara's Con Chatham knows all too well the risks of travelling without insurance. The former Consul for Australia in Malta spent four years working with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and before that, served with the Royal Australian Air Force in Vietnam, Malaysia and Washington during the Nixon, Ford and Carter presidencies.

After decades of working and travelling around the world with his wife Faye, Con's number one piece of advice to travellers is simple, "Never leave Australia without travel insurance."

Con told *Bundy Local News* that during his time working at DFAT in Canberra, one of his roles involved handling calls from Australians facing problems abroad. These included cases of lost passports, burglary, motorbike accidents, imprisonment or dealing with the death of a traveller.

He remembers one caller who had been injured in Spain when crushed between two cars and spent time in hospital.

"Unfortunately, he did not have travel insurance," said Con. "His father, who had just retired, had to sell his house to pay for his son to be flown back to Australia."

He added that on some occasions it may be necessary to fly medical assistants with the patient, making the costs even higher. Expenses that could be covered by travel insurance.

According to Smartraveller, the Australian Government's official travel advice

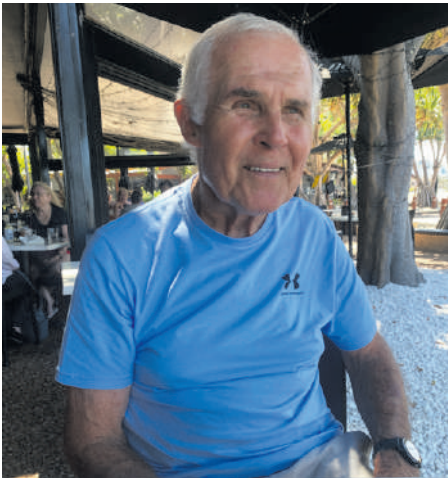
service, travel insurance is as 'essential as a passport' when travelling overseas.

It can cover medical emergencies, hospital treatment, evacuation, lost or delayed luggage and trip cancellations or disruptions. It may also reimburse non-refundable expenses if a trip is cancelled due to illness, injury, emergencies or natural disasters and help replace essential personal items if luggage is lost or delayed.

While consular services can provide assistance, the Australia Government does not cover hospital treatment or emergency flights home. Travel insurance remains the best protection for travellers against these potential costs.

Australians planning international trips, even short ones to New Zealand or Bali, should secure travel insurance before departure and ensure their policy matches the trips length, destinations, activities and personal circumstances.

For more information and advice on travel insurance visit smartraveller.gov.au



Con Chatham.

Good news for these readers

Winners of tickets to The Joe Cocker Express

THE JOE COCKER EXPRESS was on stage at the Moncrieff Theatre in October and we had three double passes to give away to this unforgettable tribute show.

A draw was held from all the correct entries and the winners were:

Susan McIntosh, Thabeban

D. Logan, Innes Park

Margaret Lye, Bargara

Sue McIntosh had this to say after the show. "I just wanted to thank you for the tickets to the Joe Cocker Express. It was a really great night, and it had everyone swaying to the music."

"It took me back to my twenties, when I would go and listen to a band's jam session. It always ended with a Joe Cocker song, with the air guitar solo."

Congratulations to the winners and thanks to all who entered this competition.

Winners of 'How Not to Diet' by Dr Michael Greger

THE BUNDY LOCAL has given away three copies of the bestselling book *How Not to Diet* by internationally renowned physician Dr Michael Greger, thanks to our friends at Pan Macmillan Australia.

We asked our readers to tell us why they would like to win one of these books. This is what some of our entrants told us:

- "How not to diet seems the only way I can diet and not drive my husband insane with the smell of cabbage soup."

- "The minute I mention the word DIET I want to eat, so maybe I need to know how not to DIET!"

- "This book might help my granddaughter who has had a warning from doctors to lose weight or get diabetes. This book would help to diet sensibly."

- "Being 71 years of age it's good to get information from people who have studied this diet thing and can teach old dogs new tricks."

- "I've been interested in all aspects of health and nutrition my whole life. I would love to see a different perspective to the dieting craze."

These lucky people have won a copy of Dr Michael Greger's book, "How Not to Diet".

Allison Jackson, Bargara

Sarah McConville, Bundaberg

Mark O'Brien, Moore Park Beach

Congratulations to our winners and thanks to all readers who entered.

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Bundaberg hairdresser gives back through 'Hair Aid'

By Mellissa Harney

AFTER 50 years in the industry, Bundaberg hairdresser Geri Sayre of Kepnock Hair is proving that scissors can be tools for change, not just style.

Geri has taken her skills global, volunteering with Hair Aid, an Australian not-for-profit that empowers people living in poverty by teaching them to cut hair and earn an

income. She recently completed her third international project, travelling to Guatemala, and in July, to Cambodia, where she helped deliver hands-on training in jails and remote communities.

Her journey began at Hair Expo Australia, where she first discovered Hair Aid's mission.

"I thought it sounded amazing, but the timing never felt right," Geri said.

Years passed, plans were delayed by the

pandemic, and then one morning she made a decision:

"If I don't do it now, I never will."

Within weeks, Geri and her daughter Kacie were booked to fly to Guatemala. The pair fundraised locally, hosted a movie night, and collected donations, from hairdressing kits to Hot Wheels cars, to bring to the children they would meet.

One of the most memorable moments was a visit to an orphanage, where they gave free haircuts and handed out toys to children and staff.

Hair Aid's international model is simple but effective: a five-day course teaching five basic haircuts. Graduates receive a certificate and a scissor kit, enabling them to start earning an income immediately.

"It's not just about a haircut," said Geri. "It's about hope and independence."

Founded in 2010 by CQUniversity alumna Selina Tomasich, Hair Aid now runs projects in five countries and delivers Hair Aid Community Cuts across Australia, providing free haircuts to people facing homeless-

ness, poverty or crisis.

Hair Aid's work is powered entirely by volunteers. International projects are self-funded, with participants covering their own travel, accommodation, and project fees. Despite the cost, the impact is transformative.

"Some of the people we train live in slums or work as trash pickers," said Tomasich. "With just three haircuts a day, they can triple their income."

Hair Aid Community Cuts is currently at capacity in Australia, with more than 100 community groups on a waiting list. Tomasich urges more hair professionals to get involved:

"If every hairdresser donated two hours every six weeks, we could meet the need."

For Geri, it's a rewarding new chapter in a long career.

"Hairdressing has given me a wonderful life," she said. "It feels good to give something back."

To learn more or volunteer, visit hairaid.org.au.



Geri Sayre of Kepnock Hair.



Children received their haircuts at the Guatemalan orphanage.

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'Afrikaans Without Borders' strengthens cultural ties in Bundaberg

By Mellissa Harney

WHEN Rochelle Nieuwenhuizen and her husband migrated from South Africa to Bundaberg in 2001, they were among only four Afrikaans-speaking families in the region. Today, that number has grown to more than 80, with Rochelle's radio program *Afrikaans Sonder Grense* ("Afrikaans Without Borders") playing a significant role in uniting the local community.

The program airs live every Thursday from 6 to 8 pm on Coral Coast Community Radio (94.7 FM), showcasing South African music, culture, and language. Rochelle established the show in March 2009 after being encouraged by a local farmer to contribute a cultural segment to community radio.

"I began with just 14 Afrikaans CDs," Rochelle recalls. "Now, I have a collection of more than 20,000 songs." The show features both classic favourites and new releases, with music regularly supplied by South African promoters and local contributors.

Beyond entertainment, Rochelle's mission is to preserve the Afrikaans language in Australia and provide a welcoming network for new families arriving in Bundaberg. She maintains contact lists to help newcomers connect with one another and participate in community gatherings.

Although the program attracts listeners from around the world, Rochelle remains fo-

cused on supporting the growing Afrikaans community in Bundaberg. She frequently invites guests to share their experiences and stories on air.

For further information or to become involved, contact rochelle.radio@yahoo.com.au or tune in to **Afrikaans Sonder Grense on 94.7 FM Coral Coast Community Radio** or via any radio app.



Rochelle Nieuwenhuizen behind the microphone.

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A look at Bundaberg through the years



1954.



Crowds rejoice over Royal visit

THE biggest news of the year if not the century was the visit by Queen Elizabeth and her husband the Duke of Edinburgh.

There was the news in early March that March 11 has been declared a public holiday.

Then there were all the updates on planning the procession route ceremony, decorations and protocol as well as the continuing talk over who was to be presented to the Royal visitors. The excitement built to fever pitch as locals prepared for the greatest thrill of their lives.

The city's illumination and decorations were complete and fine weather arrived as nearly 70,000 people from the Wide Bay and Burnett gave Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh an unforgettable welcome to Bundaberg on March 11.

The big crowd was so enthusiastic that it cheered the progress of the plane after its departure from Brisbane was broadcast at 10:40. There were 10,000 people at the airport. Hundreds slept there overnight while many others began to and take up their positions long before daybreak. The airport presented a wonderful scene with six mammoth Royal airliners and the a fleet of 10 royal motorcars occupying the tarmac..

The 300 police on duty sweated in their uniforms but did a splendid job. A crowd of 30,000 people up to 20 deep lined the city route from the General Hospital along Bourong to Burrum Street to the Showgrounds.

The crowd watched as the Land Rover spent 15 minutes driving up and downlanes of 8000 cheering flag-waving school children.

A magnificent site was presented after the Queen arrived and ascended the Royal Dais the Bundaberg band played the National Anthem and the great crowd sang

About 140 patients from Bundaberg's three hospitals were among those who caught a glimpse of the Queen thanks to the junior Chamber of Commerce which obtained chairs and put out barricades near the Centre Memorial Park opposite the General Hospital. When the Queen passed Her majesty gave them a hearty smile and an affectionate wave.

The oldest Bundaberg woman to see the queen was Ellen CLARRY who was invited with her daughter Mrs. T Broom from Moorlands to be guest in the royal enclosure

Bundaberg Cafés reported their busiest day in a year.

Ten trains had arrived in Bundaberg that morning carrying about 5000 people from Maryborough, Isis, Monto, Gympie, Kingaroy, Mount Perry and Gladstone .

1959.

Television comes to Bundaberg

LIKE anything new television had its keen supporters before it even reached Bundaberg .

In May the Chamber of Commerce complained that Bundaberg people were being treated as second class citizens by being denied access to television. All said it was unfair that the Wide Bay was not included among the provincial areas, Darling Downs, Rockhampton and Townsville from which the government planed to call for applications for regional television.



Not to be denied the television experience several Bundaberg residents set about trying to capture the signals from Brisbane and on a warm October night dozens of children sat in wonder at the top of the hummock while tests were carried out on television reception.

A television set owned by Bundaberg hotel licensee Mr Gill McNamee with a 20 foot aerial was set up for the test. For the first time both audio and video reception of channels 2 and 9 broadcast from Brisbane were clear and programmes such as Maverick and Dragnet were watched.

Radio enthusiast Clem Grimwood had less success with his 65 feet high mask he had built in the garden of his Walker Street home but by November 2 Mr Grimwood reported he was able to watch channel 2 from 7:30 pm until closing.

1978.

Bundaberg swimmer chosen in Games Team

BUNDABERG'S Michelle Pearson hit her stride during 1978.

The 15 year-old started the year with one gold silver and one bronze medal at the state titles in the 15 and 16 years age groups.

In the open events she won two silver and three bronze medals at the national age titles in Sydney. Michelle won the 220 metre individual medley in a New South Wales record at the Commonwealth games trials in Sydney in June.

She won the 400 metre individual medley earning her a place in the Australian swimming squad to attend the Commonwealth games at Edmonton in August.

At the games Michelle finished fifth in the 400 metre individual medley and seventh in the 200 metre medley.

On February 9, 1979. Michelle was

named 1978 sportsman of the year for her performance. She continued her winning ways at the pool over the next two years.



In 1980 she won the National women's open 100 metre breaststroke title, defeating Lisa Curry, the 17 year-old came third in the 200 metre backstroke, second in the 100 metre freestyle and was a member of the Queensland team which earlier won the women's 4 x 100 metre freestyle relay event.

On March 23 she was named as one of nine women in the 20 member Australian

team for the on-again off-again Moscow Olympics. Despite threats to boycott the games the Australian swimmers were there in force and Michelle swam her best ever 100 metres freestyle time finishing fourth in her heat at Moscow.

1992.

New CBD officially opened

IN 1992 a spectacle of colour erupted for the official opening of Bundaberg's "new look" central Business Street CBD on November 12. The 7½ hour program of entertainment was a combination of seven months of work.

Mayor Nita Cunningham said the revamp was a milestone for Bundaberg saying, "We believe we have chosen the design that is the best of all."

The street was closed for the big event and the 10,000 strong crowd began gathering around 3 pm at the centre.

The pavilion local entertainers included the Bundaberg Municipal Band, the Diane McLellan Dancers, Guang Guang aboriginal group and at night models in a Fashion Parade from 14 city retailers.

The wishing well was officially charged with pure water flown from the Waters of Leith in Scotland.

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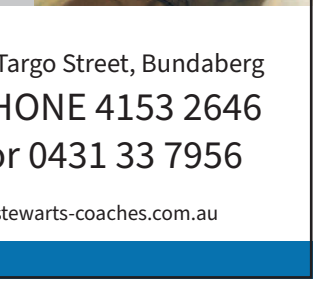
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Kids stop apps and start Nippers

MOORE PARK Surf Life Saving Club is excited to welcome the next generation of ocean loving kids. With a new Clubhouse now open, the Club is inviting children aged 5-15 to join its Nippers program, the junior arm of Surf Life Saving.

Every summer, Nippers provides a fun, family-friendly environment where kids of all abilities learn surf and water safety skills. Nippers is a key part of Surf Life Saving across Australia and is a rite of passage for many coastal families.

The program teaches beach safety, surf awareness, swimming and body surfing techniques, board paddling, rescue techniques and competition skills.

Older Nippers also develop first aid knowledge and prepare for the Surf Rescue Certificate (SRC), setting the stage for future lifesaving roles.

According to Moore Park Surf Lifesaving Club President Vita Nakrosa, between 25 and 40 children take part in the Moore Park Beach Nippers program each season and these numbers continue to grow.

Powered by a dedicated team of volunteers including qualified lifesavers, parents, youth leaders and community members, the Nippers program brings families together.

"Sunday mornings become a ritual: parents socialise over coffee, siblings play on the sand and children beam with pride after

learning new skills or completing a challenge they once thought impossible," said Ms Nakrosa.

Nippers helps children develop more than just surf skills. Facing challenges in the water boosts confidence and resilience, while team activities teach leadership, empathy and the importance of supporting others.

Kids also learn to stay calm under pressure, trust their abilities and follow instructions. For many, participation continues into their teenage years, leading to roles as lifesavers, coaches, officials, managers or club leaders, creating lasting connections and a strong sense of community.

"At Moore Park, Nippers is woven into the heart of the community. It strengthens families, builds friendships and connects generations through shared experiences on the sand and in the surf," said Ms Nakrosa.

"For families considering joining, Nippers offers not just surf skills but memories, confidence and a community that can last a lifetime," she added.

To enrol in the program, sign up via Surf Life Saving Queensland's website at www.lifesaving.com.au or by attending one of Moore Park Surf Life Saving Clubs seasonal sign-on days.

For more information visit
www.mooreparkslsc.com.au



Moore Park Surf Lifesaving Club President, Vita Nakrosa, pictured in front of the new Clubhouse.



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Qld Police Pipes and Drums perform in Royal Edinburgh Tattoo in Brisbane



Acting Senior Sergeant Lisa Phillis-Petersen leading the band.

THE ROYAL Edinburgh Military Tattoo is coming to Queensland in February 2026. Making its Brisbane debut at Suncorp Stadium, from 12- 14 February, the world-renowned military spectacular will celebrate its 75th anniversary with a breathtaking production titled The Heroes Who Made Us. Presented by RACQ, the show will pay tribute to the people and stories that have shaped the Tattoo's legacy since its beginnings in 1950.

The full-scale production will feature the Tattoo's signature Scottish bagpipes, stirring anthems, massed military bands, Tattoo Dancers and international performers from across the UK, Europe, USA, Australia, New Zealand and beyond.

Queensland Police Pipes and Drums (QPP&D) have been selected to perform alongside the Tattoo's more than 1000 international performers.

Officer in Charge of the QPP&D, Acting Senior Sergeant Lisa Phillis-Petersen, said it is an incredible honour and a moment of pride for the band.

"The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo is the pinnacle of global performance

and to stand on that stage representing the QPS is a great opportunity, not only to strength our relationship between the Service and the international community, but to demonstrate the talents within our own home state," said Acting Senior Sergeant Phillis-Petersen.

This will be the first time the Tattoo will return to Australia since 2019 and is expected to be one of its most ambitious international stadium productions to date. Audiences can expect a truly unforgettable experience with spectacular displays of music, precision, pageantry, and pride.

The highly anticipated event is supported by the Queensland Government, Tourism and Events Queensland, and Brisbane City Council through Brisbane Economic Development Agency in partnership with Suncorp Stadium

Following its performances in Brisbane, the Tattoo will travel to Auckland's Eden Park in New Zealand from 19 -21 February, 2026.

Tickets for the Brisbane leg of the show are available now through Ticketek.

On a bike and a mission: Pauly James pedals through Bargara

CYCLING solo around Australia might seem like an extreme feat, but for Pauly James, it's a journey with purpose - an over 18,000-kilometre ride to raise funds and awareness for youth mental health through the Ballina-based charity Human Nature.

The youth worker launched the campaign on 28 April 2025 and passed through Bargara early in the trip to visit friends. His ambitious route circles the continent: from Queensland through Cape York, across the Northern Territory and Western Australia, and returning via New South Wales.

Human Nature, the charity he's supporting, offers adventure therapy for young people navigating mental health challenges - a struggle Pauly has experienced firsthand.

"Getting people talking, that's just as important as the kilometres," he said.

Sharing route maps, photos, and honest reflections from the road, Pauly documents the journey on Instagram, Strava, and a Substack blog.

The ride has tested his limits with tough terrain, long distances, physical fatigue, and the solitude of solo travel. But it's also brought moments of connection: chance conversations, local hospitality, and growing community support.

Pauly reached Brisbane as he planned on 30th November and raised \$23,000 with more donations still coming in.

Pauly's ride has become more than a physical odyssey; it's a powerful, rolling conversation about resilience, mental health, and the communities that carry us forward. He has plans to ride in Europe and Africa.

You can support Pauly's ride by making a donation at:
www.breakthecycle.raiselysite.com



Pauly James pictured at Bargara.



BUNDABERG 2026 CALENDAR

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<div><div></div>Public Holidays</div> <div><div></div>School Holidays</div>	<p>New Year's Day Holiday January 1</p> <p>Australia Day January 26</p> <p>Good Friday April 3</p> <p>Easter Monday..... April 6</p> <p>Anzac Day..... April 25</p> <p>Labour Day..... May 4</p> <p>1770 Festival May 22-24</p>	<p>Childers Show May 23</p> <p>Bundaberg Show Holiday May 28</p> <p>Gin Gin Show..... May 30 & 31</p> <p>Childers Multi-Cultural Festival..... July 23 to 26</p> <p>Royal Queensland Show Holiday (Ekka) - Brisbane only..... August 12</p>	<p>Taste Festival Sept. 4-13</p> <p>Agro Trend Bundaberg Sept. 11 & 12</p> <p>King's Birthday..... October 5</p> <p>Christmas Eve December 24</p> <p>Christmas Day..... December 25</p> <p>Boxing Day December 26</p> <p>Boxing Day Holiday December 28</p>
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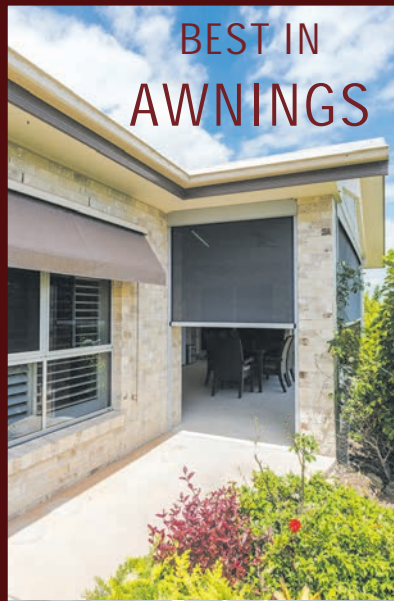
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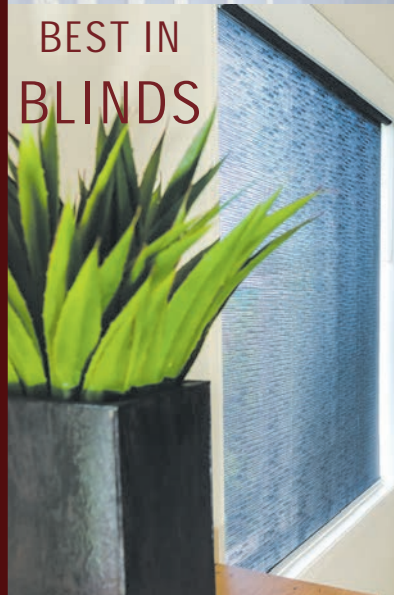
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