

Sydney Observer

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Having a laugh with
**Julia
Morris**

CHATTING
WITH
LOCAL
HEROES



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BAKING

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Hello readers –
welcome to 2021!

We are so grateful to be back doing what we love – sharing premium local news and lifestyle content with the North Shore community.



Starting the year off with a bang, we have the charismatic Julia Morris as our February cover, talking all things *I'm A Celebrity*, the unattainability of New Year's resolutions and reflecting on the chaotic year that was 2020 (14-15).

There is also plenty of back-to-school content in our Education section, including messages from some of the great schools in the local area, along with the news you need to know (16-19). Even more exciting, are our additional profiles with Opera Australia (47), Ku-ring-gai Local Citizens of the Year (9) and the NSW State Recipient Local Hero for 2021 (12). With a tantalising dessert recipe (45), a cheeky Pet Corner (37) and plenty of Beauty and Wellbeing tips and tricks (38-43), there is something in this issue for all.

Be sure to send us some love and get in touch via @sydney_observer on Instagram.

Isabella



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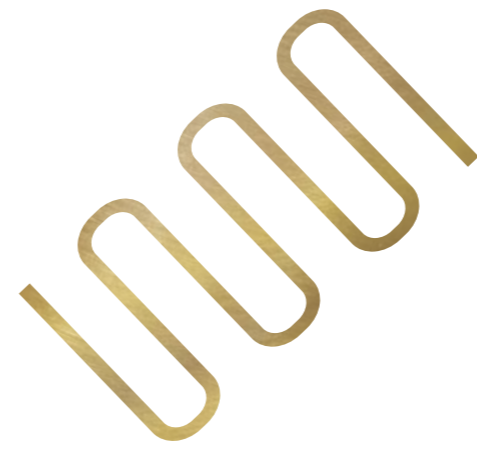
PUBLISHED BY: Kamdha Pty. Ltd.
EDITOR: Isabella Ross
 (editor@kamdha.com)
CONTRIBUTORS: Ralph Davis, Russell Bailey, Brian Roach, Dr Sue Ferguson, Rejimon Punchayil, Dr Ian Sweeney, Amy Sandig, Sarah Wainwright, Kerrie Erwin.
DESIGNER: Frederico S. M. de Carvalho
BOOKING DEADLINE: 15th of the month
PHONE: (02) 9884 8699
ADDRESS: PO Box 420, Killara NSW 2071

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Pacific Highway Road Works

Motorists are advised of changed traffic conditions on the Pacific Highway at Wahroonga, Turramurra and Warrabee for road work to be carried out at the intersections of Redleaf Avenue, Fox Valley Road and Finlay Road. Work involves utility adjustments, tree lopping and removal, kerb works, road asphaltting, line marking and signposting work. Temporary lane closures, traffic control and reduced speed limits will be in place for the safety of pedestrians, workers and motorists. The work will be carried out from February to late March, weather permitting.

Ku-ring-gai Mayor's Milestone

Ku-ring-gai Mayor Jennifer Anderson reached a historic milestone recently, officially becoming Ku-ring-gai's longest serving Mayor in the council's 104-year history, news which we published in detail on our website (to read visit sydneyobserver.com). "My thanks to the *Sydney Observer* for marking my terms as Ku-ring-gai's longest serving Mayor by publishing my call for more women in local government. With council elections in September this year, it would be great to see more women stand for election to their local council," commented Ms Anderson.

Return & Earn Turramurra, St Ives

Return & Earn is coming to the Upper North Shore. The Ray Street public car park at Turramurra and the St Ives Shopping Centre car park will be the first sites in Ku-ring-gai to have reverse vending machines installed. Reverse vending machines work by taking collections of approved bottles and containers in return for 10 cents for each bottle or container. A printed or digital receipt can be reimbursed for goods and services at participating supermarkets.

Sydney Home Coming Soon

Sydney Observer is excited to announce that there is something on the horizon as part of the Kamdha Media family. *Sydney Home* is Sydney's choice home inspiration digital platform, featuring the latest trends in home improvement and lifestyle – coming soon! We are thrilled to continue to share premium local-minded content with our amazing North Shore community. To keep up to date with the exciting venture, follow Sydney Home on Instagram [@sydneyhome_](https://www.instagram.com/sydneyhome_)

Royal North Shore's Message

Clinicians at Royal North Shore Hospital's burns unit are urging the community to be careful and avoid burns this summer. Royal North Shore Hospital's Head of Department, Burns, Reconstructive and Plastic Surgery, Dr Rob Gates said on average the team treats 120 burn injuries sustained from fire pits, barbeques and campfires per year. "While the summer season is a great time for family and friends to get together for a barbecue or campfire, it's so important fire and burn safety remain top of mind," he said.

Wahroonga Shopping Strip Makeover

Fox Valley Shopping Centre in Wahroonga is set to be upgraded. Work is expected to be completed by the middle of 2021, as part of council's 'Neighbourhood Centres Revitalisation Program.' On the agenda is modified layouts, new paving and footpaths, bike parking and added seating and landscaping. "Fox Valley Road is a thriving local centre, and we hope the upgrade will make it even more attractive for shoppers," noted Mayor Jennifer Anderson.



krq.nsw.gov.au



Water Restrictions Eased

Water Wise Guidelines have now replaced Level 1 water restrictions according to the NSW Government given the rise of Warragamba Dam. The guidelines apply to all in Sydney, Blue Mountains and the Illawarra. Things you cannot do is allow water to run off onto hard surfaces, leave taps and hoses running unattended and allow pools or spas to overflow when being filled. Even though restrictions have eased, it is always best to remain water wise!



New Roseville Park

Abingdon Road Reserve is the latest playground in the Ku-ring-gai area to be upgraded and made inclusive for all kids. Located in Roseville, the new playground has accessible pathways and play equipment suited for a range of ages and abilities, along with new fencing, landscaping, drinking fountains and seating. Work on the new playground was partially funded by a grant of \$50,000 from the Everyone Can Play program, a State Government initiative aimed at creating accessible and inclusive play spaces.



Sardaka, Feb 2013/Wikimedia

Local Property Hotspots

In 2020, the Upper North Shore saw great interest from property buyers, and it looks like this trend is here to stay for 2021. According to data published by *gnews*, St Ives, Pymble and Hornsby are predicted to increase in popularity. Given the local area is abundant with schools, parks and beautiful homes, it is no wonder it is a property hotspot. Also consider getting your home valued – it's always great to know how your property is reflecting the current market.

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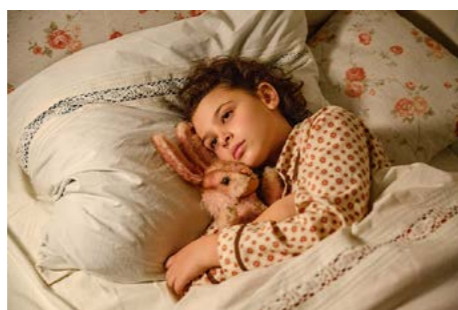


Jewish International Film Festival

From star-studded features, gripping historical dramas and stories of iconic Jewish innovators, the Jewish International Film Festival (JIFF) returns to Sydney. From February 18 – March 24, Sydneysiders can watch some incredible films from around the world, showcased at the Ritz Cinemas in Randwick and Roseville Cinema.

“I am delighted to present our vibrant 2021 program, now back in cinemas. This year’s program celebrates the richness and diversity of Jewish culture around the world. The line-up includes Australian premieres of fifty films and three series, with nineteen countries represented on screen. From deeply personal documentaries on the trailblazers who changed the world, to touching true stories illuminating the untold stories from our history, as well as some truly impressive star-studded films, JIFF 2021 will reach all ages across the full spectrum of politics and religion,” said Jewish International Film Festival Artistic Director, Eddie Tamir.

From multi-Academy Award winning director Freida Lee Mock comes *Ruth – Justice Ginsburg In Her Own Words*. It tells the story of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who despite having ‘three strikes’ against her – being Jewish, a woman, and a mother – went from a top-of-the-class law graduate struggling to find work to a Supreme Court Justice who changed the world. In addition, there are stories revisiting World War II included in the line-up. *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit* is based on a best-selling trilogy for children, following a Jewish family fleeing Berlin in the 1930s as seen through the innocent eyes



The Last Vermeer (top) and *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit*.

of their nine-year-old daughter. *Persian Lessons*, follows a Jewish man who, by falsely claiming he’s Persian instead of Jewish, narrowly escapes execution and becomes tasked with teaching a camp officer how to speak Persian, despite not knowing a single word of it himself. Starring Golden Globe nominee and Australian actor Guy Pearce, *The Last Vermeer* is a post-World War II feature following an Army officer tasked with investigating paintings that fell into Nazi possession during the war. A notorious Dutch art dealer is tried for selling the Nazis a valuable masterpiece but pleads his innocence by claiming it was a forgery.

<https://www.jiff.com.au/>

Worn Up Project Launches Locally

Five local schools have joined Ku-ring-gai Council’s initiative to reduce clothing waste by recycling unwanted school uniforms into usable products.

Sadly, approximately 700 tonnes of unwanted uniform clothing end up in landfill each year – a statistic Worn Up aims to reverse. Worn Up is the brainchild of the Sustainable Schoolwear and Workwear company and has the backing of EPA and the UNSW Smart Centre. Instead of putting these old uniforms in landfill, they will instead be put into Worn Up’s recycling system, where the raw materials within each garment will be used to manufacture new recycled items.

How the project works is that at participating schools a ‘pod’ (as shown in the image) will be installed, where students can leave their unwanted old uniform clothing. When the pod is full, all uniforms will be collected and recycled or rehomed where possible – win/win!

Council joined the Worn Up project in response to the results of a waste audit carried out in Ku-ring-gai last year. The audit found that on average 3% of red bin waste and 3.7% of booked waste kerbside collections was made up of unwanted clothing. For 2021, attention is turning to families with school aged children through the recycling of school uniforms.

“I know the participating schools are very excited about the possibilities of turning clothing into useful everyday items,” noted Mayor Jennifer Anderson. Five public schools have agreed to participate in the project – Killara Public, Turramurra Public, Warrawee Public, Roseville Public and Beaumont Road Public.

<https://wornup.com/>



Ku-ring-gai NSW Local Citizen of the Year Awards

The Ku-ring-gai Australia Day Awards are presented each year in recognition of groups and individuals who made a significant contribution to the community. “The pandemic has not stopped hundreds of volunteers who have worked round the clock to help local people. This year more than ever we should recognise and applaud their contribution,” Mayor Jennifer Anderson noted. A special congratulations from *Sydney Observer* to the winners!

CITIZEN OF THE YEAR: MICHELLE KEY

Michelle is the founder of charity NorthShoreMumsSmiles2U. Smiles2U provides care bags to children in local hospitals, as well as toiletry packs for parents caught unprepared for hospital stays, cancer and care packages for parents staying at the children’s palliative care facility. Michelle also became an invaluable member of the Wheels For Ryan fundraising team which managed to raise over \$75,000 to help a local family purchase a vehicle suitable for their disabled child. Along with walking to raise money for the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women’s Shelter, Michelle also coordinated community responses for Share the Dignity bags for homeless women and toiletry packs for female RFS volunteers during last year’s Summer Bushfires.

YOUNG CITIZEN OF THE YEAR: EDWARD GILES

In 2019, Edward established a partnership with Ku-ring-gai Council through his leadership role at Killara High. Edward and other school prefects hosted an event to advertise Gordon Youth Centre’s services for young people with mental health issues. Edward attended a mental health forum at Macquarie University to learn about new resources and initiatives which were then implemented at Killara High.

YOUNG ENVIRONMENTAL CITIZEN OF THE YEAR: ELLA DI MORO

Ella started The Pink Pantry in Wyomee Street, West Pymble whereby people put their excess food and plants to share with the community, saving landfill, waste and cost. It’s essentially



a free pantry of home-grown products, with The Pink Pantry’s Facebook page sharing with members updates on what seedlings, fruit, vegetables, flowers, and other produce have been added. She paints her own bird houses, makes bee hotels and supplies local residents with horse, chicken and cow manure.

ENVIRONMENTAL CITIZEN OF THE YEAR: PLANT RESCUE KU-RING-GAI

Plant Rescue Ku-ring-gai was established with a Ku-ring-gai Council environmental grant. The not for profit has been set up to rescue plants often thrown away when a property is demolished. The recovered plants are then found a new home with local residents or in school gardens. Fifteen sites have had plants rescued, with over 250 plants finding new homes.

MAYOR’S AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE: LIFELINE HARBOUR TO HAWKESBURY (H2H) CHRISTMAS HAMPER APPEAL AND KISSING POINT SPORTS CLUB.

Lifeline H2H Christmas Hamper Appeal provide hampers to people, particularly families, experiencing mental health issues, financial distress, job loss, relationship breakdowns, domestic violence or poor health. Lifeline H2H relies on local volunteers to manage this project, with volunteers travelling to pick up donations, wrapping presents and packing hundreds of hampers.

The Kissing Point Sports Club has been an integral part of Ku-ring-gai’s sporting and social life since 1957, run by a team of dedicated volunteers who recognise the importance of team sports. The club provides a shared constitution, governance and financial oversight for five sporting codes, all managed independently by volunteers. These are baseball, cricket, football, netball and softball. In 2020 alone, the club catered for more than 2000 players ranging in age from 5 to 65, both male and female of all abilities.



Changes to Council Meetings

The meeting at 7pm Tuesday 16 February 2021 will be held online. Council meetings are closed to the public until further notice, but can be viewed at krg.nsw.gov.au/livestream

Public Forums are no longer being held in the Council Chambers due to COVID-19. The public can address Council through audio or video recordings (max 3 mins) or written submissions to Councillors.

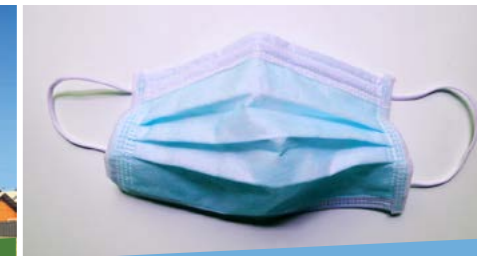
Visit krg.nsw.gov.au/meetings Ph: (02) 9424 0000



Return and Earn

Reverse vending machines are coming to Ku-ring-gai! In the next few weeks, machines will be installed at Turramurra and St Ives with more locations to follow.

Dispose of your unwanted bottles and containers in return for a 10 cent refund on each approved bottle and container. To find out more visit krg.nsw.gov.au



COVID-19 updates

For details on all COVID-19 issues affecting Ku-ring-gai Council visit our website at krg.nsw.gov.au

We strongly encourage customers to wear a mask when visiting indoor facilities such as the Council’s customer service centre, libraries, the Wildflower Garden Visitor Centre and the Ku-ring-gai Art Centre.



The Turramurra Theatre

The Autumn Garden (1978)
Lorna Moore, Alan Davis,
Shirley Jackson, Mary Knapman.

Ralph Davis from Ku-ring-gai Historical Society

Who among us doesn't love a night out at the theatre! Sadly 2020 wasn't the greatest year for such indulgences, but let's reminisce for a while about one of Ku-ring-gai's forgotten gems. The Turramurra Theatre was a local drama group which presented around forty plays and musicals between 1975 and 1987, most productions presented in Turramurra Public School's Assembly Hall.

The Ku-ring-gai Historical Society (KHS) recently received some donations of Turramurra Theatre memorabilia including theatre programmes, newsletters, articles, publicity flyers, photos and even theatre tickets, from three former members – Alan Davis, Ron Knapman and Ruth Langburne. Ron and Ruth were in fact two of The Turramurra Theatre's founding members. Even prior to then, they were involved with the theatre's direct predecessor, the Kissing Point Drama Club, formed in 1972. Did you know that The Turramurra Theatre almost had a close brush with Hollywood stardom? Yes, two of its members were none other than Wallace and Anne Weaving – parents of then-yet-to-be world-famous actor, Hugo Weaving! In 1979 Wallace put in a fine performance as Sgt. Cadwallader in Agatha Christie's *The Unexpected Guest* (and I can say that with confidence – I was there in the audience as my brother, Alan Davis, played a part in the same production).

I recently had the pleasure of sitting down to chat with Ruth Langburne, who performed in more than a dozen plays. Ruth and Wallace performed together in a Music Hall Revue at St Ives Bowling Club around 1983, and she



A Christmas Carol (1978) Ron Knapman as the Ghost of Marley, Frank Rowe as Scrooge.

recalled that Wallace was an accomplished actor with an equally fine singing voice.

Ruth also reminisced about performing Alan Ayckbourn's *Table Manners* in 1981, which rather than being performed on the stage as usual, was instead performed in-the-round. Moreover, the cast needed to master the art of appearing to eat a meal. The food



Out of the Question (1976) Ron Knapman, Ruth Langburne.

was real, but only tiny bites could be taken, or they'd end up chewing their way into their upcoming lines! They had a lot of fun getting their timings just right for this during rehearsals – but thankfully, as the old saying goes, it went alright on the night! Another play that stands out for Ruth is Terence Rattigan's *The Deep Blue Sea*, which deals with some highly emotive issues, and which she found quite challenging to perform.

Sadly, The Turramurra Theatre is one of those rare slices of history where even Google yields no results, other than a smattering of listings in the 'Theatre' section of archived copies of the *Sydney Morning Herald*. But what is evident is the incredible history and stories of The Turramurra Theatre that still sit with North Shore locals.

Do you have fond memories of The Turramurra Theatre? Or perhaps any memorabilia? If so, the KHS would love to hear from you, to help keep local history alive! Email khs@khs.org.au

Rotary Club of Ku-ring-gai

As a contribution to the economic impact felt by many as a result of COVID-19, the club donated \$1000 to Lifeline. Funds go towards food and care packages for needy people in the local community. In partnership with the Rotary Club of Turramurra, both branches operate the Gordon Markets held monthly (upcoming one on 14th February), with all funds raised donated to charitable causes.

Rotary Club of St Ives

Rotary Club of St Ives is on the lookout for new local members. Interested? The club is looking for people who are community-minded, passionate, fun, practical, resourceful and helpful. If you are indeed someone who possesses these qualities, then now is the time to get in touch with the Membership Director, John Waterhouse (0419 556 145).

Rotary Club of Turramurra

Graffiti Removal Day was marked last month, an occasion encouraging the community to sponsor or volunteer in the effort to clean up our neighbourhoods. The Rotary Club of Turramurra plays a big part in eliminating existing graffiti in the local community. This is done through ventures such as establishing communication and reporting networks and encouraging community education to deter activities of illegal graffiti.



Rotary Club of Wahroonga

Wahroonga Rotary's Community Caring Awards recognise individuals and organisations who continue to support their community. Janet was recognised recently for her many years of dedicated and compassionate support of sufferers of Multiple Sclerosis in the area, both raising money to provide assistance and also acting as an ally. Janet's nominator, a former president of the group, described her as "the kindest, most empathetic person I have ever known. She acts, while others are still thinking about the problem. Despite the fact that she is aged in her 80s, she is tireless in her support."



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Australian of the Year Awards, Local Hero 2021 Recipient Rosemary Kariuki.

NSW State Recipient Local Hero 2021: Rosemary Kariuki

Isabella Ross

Avibrant personality, Rosemary Kariuki is no stranger in her neighbourhood. An advocate for migrant and refugee women, the multicultural community liaison officer for the Parramatta Police and her work with the African Women's Group and Cultural Exchange Program, she is one busy woman! *Sydney Observer* spoke with Rosemary about her work in the community, along with her award win as the NSW State Recipient Local Hero 2021 as part of the Australian of the Year Awards. If there is one thing Rosemary wants people to do it is this – go and get to know your neighbour.

Congratulations on the award win! What was your reaction when you first found out?

I was so shocked! It was not in my mind that I was going to win and there were so many established people among me that have done wonderful things. But I was very grateful.

What were some of your experiences that led to you doing this work with migrants?

When I first arrived in Australia from Kenya around 21 years ago, no one spoke to me. I was living in a building in Randwick and my neighbours never talked. So, I decided to put Christmas cards under each of their doorsteps, introducing myself and saying Happy New Year and from that day everyone stopped and talked to me. By people getting to know each other and meet people from other cultures, that is why I started the Cultural Exchange Program. What we do is that a group of migrant women from many different countries come to live for a few days in NSW rural communities that are mainly White Australian, and that way different women from different cultures come together. You can see them laughing and sharing stories. I like making people happy and sharing

information with them. The more people that mix, the better our community will be.

Tell me about some of the work you've done with the African Women's Group?

In partnership with the African Women's Group, I helped start the African Women's Dinner Dance, which has been going for 14 years! African women can come together, access information, enjoy a dance and some food. Even in the first year we had 350 women attend. We had a domestic violence survivor talk about domestic violence in Australia, and after she talked about her experience, she had 20 women come to talk to her about their experiences. Everyone wears colourful jewels and clothing from their cultural background – from there they make friendships and learn what is available for them here in Australia.

What was it like filming the documentary *Rosemary's Way* (2020, finalist at the Sydney Film Festival)?

That was really interesting. I gave the Director a list of the projects I was doing, so she could choose what she wished to film. For me, I do what I do. The cameras didn't change anything. They followed my work for 3 years, filming some of the Cultural Exchange Programs in action. I love what I do.

If there is one message you wish to share with our readers, what would it be?

My message to all is to go and get to know your neighbour. Offer to go for a walk together, take their bins out, drive them to the grocery shop, share stories. Small actions make a big difference. We need to break down those barriers – once you get to know one another and talk, you start to realise that we are all the same.

To see the trailer of *Rosemary's Way*, visit: rosemarysawaythefilm.org/#trailer

Valentine's Day on the North Shore

Isabella Ross



Picnic Brunch at Wahroonga

There's nothing quite like welcoming in the day than with a delicious coffee and pastry picnic. Wahroonga Park is such a beautiful local spot with ample space for social distancing. With tonnes of takeaway options across the cafes and patisseries on Redleaf Avenue and Railway Avenue, there is something to suit any couple's brunch date. Bring your picnic blanket, maybe buy your loved one a nice gift from one of the homewares shops or florists nearby and enjoy a delicious brunch together.

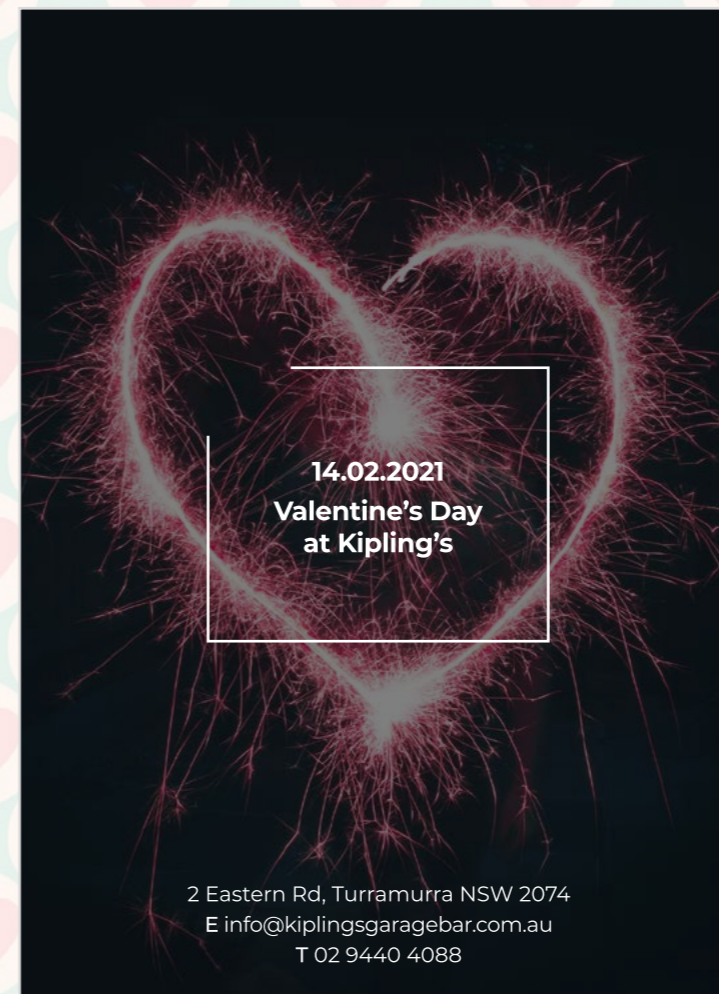
Quick Dip at Balmoral Beach

Celebrating the warm weather, it is always lovely to have a nice dip at Balmoral Beach. Toast Valentine's Day by having a stroll along the sand, jumping off the pier, or even hiring a paddleboard and giving it a go together. However, Sundays are a super busy day at Mosman, so perhaps consider a sunrise or sunset swim to ensure ample parking is available – because nothing quells the mood quite like trying to find a park in peak traffic!



Shopping for Jewellery at Turramurra

Jewellery is always a nice gift or memento to mark a romantic occasion. On the North Shore we are blessed with lots of fine crafted jewellers offering stunning pieces – in particular Turramurra Jewellers on Pacific Highway. As we all know – jewellery is the way to a woman's heart.



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Say hello to
2021 with

Julia Morris



Isabella Ross

Hilarious, down to earth and unapologetically her, Julia Morris is adored by Aussie audiences. Whether it's hosting, acting, singing or her comedy shows, the arts is where Julia shines best. *Sydney Observer* sat down with Julia to chat about the success of *I'm a Celebrity*, reflect on the year that was 2020 and what's in her sight for 2021.

I'm a *Celebrity* was an absolute hit this year, with filming down under coming with one major silver lining for Julia. "The good fun thing about this year personally, was being able to stay home in Australia. Even though no one can deny it is one of the experiences in life to be able to spend time in South Africa, getting to be on the same time zone as my family and friends made a significant difference to how lonely I feel when I'm away. I've got two lovely ladies, so the time zone often makes it extra tough."

As we saw, there were still plenty of *unique* foods for the celebrities to experience in Australia. "Yucky food is yucky food. The

cockroach is universal – I'm sure they taste the same all over the world! There was a fabulous mix of contestants this year as well. More so than ever before, all our different generations got to say their piece and feel seen. It was nice to hear lots of different opinions, as sometimes it's important to slow down, listen and hear someone else's view."

One of the best aspects of the hit show is also the strong friendship between Dr Chris Brown and Julia. "Chris and I had one of our favourite years together as a 'TV couple!' We had lots of fun. I had been on 33 weeks of lockdown in Melbourne prior to filming, and I honestly didn't know if I had any funny left in me. I know that sounds ridiculous, but it had a significant effect on our disposition. So, the idea of immediately leaping to joy turned out to be less of a leap than I expected it would."

Julia also recently celebrated her wedding anniversary, having married her husband Dan on New Year's Eve in Las Vegas 2005. Yet like everything in 2021, the celebration was a little different compared to usual. "We celebrated in our pyjamas! We just couldn't be bothered. We stayed up to see the New Year in, and it was very much a follow up from how we had spent the whole year – with the family."

With 2021 on the mind, I was intrigued to see whether New Year's resolutions were something Julia responded to. "My New Year's resolution is always to *not* make a New Year's resolution and I've been nailing it for years!" she laughs. "Most of the time they are just a bit self-critical, like I've eaten too many raspberry bullets or fruit mince tarts – I don't need to start off my year judging how much I've eaten. I'd rather start my year by taking it slowly, looking at what is in front



I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here! Hosts Dr Chris Brown and Julia Morris.

My New Year's resolution is always to not make a New Year's resolution and I've been nailing it for years!

across four continents. I love the arts – it's the only job I've ever had!"

To keep up to date with Julia check her out on Instagram @ladyjuliamorris or her website <https://juliamorris.com/>

of me, and trying to respond with as much kindness as I can."

"I think 2021 is going to be a similar slice of adaptation. I'm not sure we are going to be out and about as much as we would like to – that very well may be my lockdown PTSD talking!" Having been in Melbourne lockdown for 111 days, it is no wonder that Julia feels cautious about simply labelling 2021 as the antithesis of 2020. "It will be about trying to adapt as quickly as possible to a new situation. All this resilience we've been talking to our children about for years, now's the time to put it into place ourselves."

"I am also becoming more and more vocal in the day to day about calling people out about jokes that I strongly disagree with. Or observations where someone isn't being fair to women and let me tell you it isn't welcome at all. Now I'm at an age and position in my career where I'll call it where I see it – that's the least I can do for my two girls," Julia notes.

As for what is next on the agenda for Julia, there is lots to be excited about. Julia has a comedy show set for Saturday May 29 at Enmore Theatre in Sydney, along with a hilarious book around the corner. The book will be available from February 23 through Audible, with paperback out later in the year through Harper Collins. "I spent last year writing a book as well – a self-help book from yet another deluded celebrity! I have been very fortunate that not only working in the arts has been my job, but I've been able to do it

Julia's Favourite Things

Favourite pastime/hobby?

Eating raspberry bullets!

The funniest or strangest thing you've read about yourself?

That I had fled Australia with anorexia. Bizarre. That would have been in the late '90s. It was just an outright lie.

Advice to your younger self?

More laughter and find a good psychologist.

A career highlight?

That I'm still working at 52, having started on Australian TV when I was 17.

A subject or cause close to your heart?

One that is very close to my heart is the

National Breast Cancer Foundation. I've worked with them for years and have had personal experiences with the disease, given my husband was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2012.

What are you most proud of?

Not killing anyone before, during and after menopause.

HSC Success for Local Schools

Having to cope with a pandemic, lockdowns and undeniable change and adaptation, the HSC class of 2020 deserves all of our praises. There's lots to celebrate on the Upper North Shore, with all schools achieving wonderful results, with many ranking in the state-wide Top 100 high achieving schools. There was also a great mix within the Top 100 of both Government, Selective and Independent schools. *Sydney Observer* passes our congratulations onto all students for doing their best and to the cohort for achieving a fantastic result.

Upper North Shore HSC Ranking

- Hornsby High School: 6
- Normanhurst Boys High School: 7
- Abbotsleigh: 16
- Knox Grammar School: 19
- Loreto Normanhurst: 26
- Pymble Ladies' College: 31
- Roseville College: 35
- St Ignatius' College: 44
- Barker College: 47
- Ravenswood School for Girls: 58
- Willoughby Girl's High School: 59
- Brigidine College St Ives: 62
- Glenside Rudolf S. School: 64
- Chatswood High School: 69
- Arden Anglican School: 79
- Mercy Catholic College: 93
- Killara High School: 100

Sydney Scores in World Uni Rankings

Numerous Sydney universities have been ranked among the top 200 global universities, as part of the 2021 UK Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings. THE World University rankings are assessed on five pillars, each of which represents a key area of higher education excellence: teaching, industry income, research, citations and international outlook. Local tertiary institutions included University of Sydney (51), UNSW Sydney (67), University of Technology Sydney (160) and Macquarie University (195). The overall 2021 rankings included more than 1,500 universities across 93 countries and regions, making them the largest and most diverse university rankings thus far!

University of Sydney's Anderson Stuart Building



Care and Collaboration in a Pandemic

Pivot, reimagine, unprecedented and exhausted ... all well used words to describe 2020. But, what about 'congratulations', 'we did it', and 'we are safe?'

Arden Anglican School in Beecroft and Epping celebrated the end of the 2020 school year through a series of four live streamed events from their newly opened Creative Arts Centre. The Principal, Mr Graham Anderson explained in his address to the school community, that 2020 was relabelled *The Year of Care*. He explained that parents, students and staff had rediscovered care: care for each other through connection, responsibility, appreciation and most importantly, care by working together to learn new things.

In March, Arden's ICT Team under the leadership of Mr Craig Murray moved to remote learning. The school has been astounded by some of the statistics that the year revealed: 110, 761 Microsoft Teams messages sent, 24, 588 meets, 17, 209 calls. Examples of some of the creativity included bringing a pet to class and going into the backyard to investigate different leaves. The staff designed physical education lessons that could be carried out in a confined space, which was especially challenging with some students living in apartments, but all the effort was richly rewarded, and some parents even joined their children's lessons.

"2020, more than ever, was a time where the students needed to embrace our School Values of Courage, Compassion, Hope, Respect, Service and Love," commented Mr Anderson. "We are grateful to our whole school community for helping to keep us safe, for being strong, for stretching, standing firm and for showing care for themselves and others. We are also grateful to our Heavenly Father, who answered our 2020 prayers."

Arden will commence Campus Tours again in 2021.

Registration online is essential.

www.arden.nsw.edu.au

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WELL TAUGHT

Think Board Games Are Just For Fun? Think Again!

Isabella Ross

Every family has a special memory of a board game they have played together. Whether it is a quarrel over property and money in Monopoly, trying to 'out-word' one another in Scrabble or climb the rung higher than your challenger in Snakes and Ladders. Even though some of us think of board games as simple family fun, there is actually a significant educational value associated with many of the classics. A recent study at Belgrave University (2020) found that board games are a strong form of educational media, "requiring sophisticated intellectual and emotional engagement."

EXPAND VOCABULARY

Iconic games such as Boggle and Scrabble are great ways for both kids and adults to expand their vocabulary and better their spelling skills. Not to mention it can foster healthy brain development and cognition.

HOW TO GRACIOUSLY LOSE

There is nothing worse than a sore loser! Meta-messages can be interpreted throughout the action of playing a board game – commonly encouraging teamwork, sportsmanship, independent thinking. Sportsmanship comes in the form of how one reacts to either winning or losing, promoting resilience that it is not the end of the world if winning is not achieved.



SHARPEN FOCUS

Board games take a lot of focus, encouraging players to be present, reflect analytically, consider future moves and also memorise. Cluedo, Memory, Chess and Monopoly are examples of games that reflect this skill, particularly given that they can help lengthen one's attention span.

UNPLUG FROM TECHNOLOGY

There consistently seems to be worry among the older generation that the younger generation is addicted to their phones. Regardless of whether it is true or not, I think we can confidently say that technology is always a fingertip away. That is why sitting down to play any board game with the family is a great way to reconnect and have a bit of a digital detox.

Nature Play at Wildflower Garden

There is nothing quite like getting one's hands dirty, the breeze on the skin and discovering new flora and fauna. As children, many of us have fond memories of exploring our own backyards, and only coming inside for teatime. Yet with screens now the new norm, it is always important to keep the little ones stimulated in their surroundings rather than with a face full of technology (although of course easier said than done!)

According to the Child Mind Institute, spending time in nature has been seen to promote creativity and imagination, teach responsibility, provide different stimulation, reduce stress and get kids moving! The Nature Play program at Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden relates strongly to this research evidence, significantly improving all aspects of early childhood development – physical, cognitive, social and emotional. The program is structured with new nature themes each week designed to develop curious minds and playful spirits.



NATURE PLAY FOR PRE-SCHOOLERS: STORYBOOK ADVENTURES

Date: 3rd February
Time: 10am – 11:30am
Where: Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden

NATURE PLAY FOR TODDLERS: STOMPING WITH DINOSAURS

Date: 9th February
Time: 10am – 11:30am
Where: Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden

NATURE PLAY FOR TODDLERS: THE LITTLE SEED

Date: 16th February
Time: 10am – 11:30am
Where: Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden

NATURE PLAY FOR TODDLERS: DAY TIME AND NIGHT TIME

Date: 23rd February
Time: 10am – 11:30am
Where: Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden

Activities cost \$20 per child with one parent/carer admitted free of charge. All activities are COVID-19 safe and bookings are essential as spaces are limited.

www.krg.nsw.gov.au/Things-to-do/Ku-ring-gai-Wildflower-Garden/Kids-programs-and-activities/Kids-programs-activities/Nature-Play

Educating in an Uncertain Future

Russell Bailey, Headmaster at Redeemer Baptist School

We are starting another new school year in the context of all that is yet to be resolved from 2020. Our Christmas holidays have been characterised by travel restrictions, masks and severely restricted numbers at family and community celebrations. And it is not yet clear how long schools will need to operate as semi-isolated bubbles while we attempt to protect our communities from the threat of the COVID pandemic. Welcome to 2021!

The purpose of schooling has been described as either conservatively passing on culture or progressively shaping a different future. But in light of the intrusion of a virus that has profoundly disturbed the normal flow of our educational, social and business lives, perhaps we should recognise the potential that school has to bring some order to the chaos.

For this reason, teachers will turn up to schools again in 2021 with a belief that the



knowledge, skills and understanding that they impart may help students contribute to the resolution of their future crises. We also saw that schools nurture our present need for the compassion of human community in the quest to give meaning to our existence, especially in times of adversity.

Perhaps when the tremors of future uncertainty begin to shake the being of a child, that is when it is most important for them to have access through religious education at school to the Genesis account of creation. This of course speaks of God

transforming chaotic elements to make a beautiful, inhabitable world – like our hope that mass vaccinations will give us the confidence to move across borders again freely, without threatening our health. And there is more, because the story of God moves forward to bridge over threatening uncertainties with eternal love in Jesus Christ for a totally good future.

Let us go to school in 2021 not as victims of uncertainty but as humans with the good news that we may look forward to a better world tomorrow.



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- > CSIRO Bebras Australia Computational Thinking Honour Roll, 2020
- > 1st in AAMT Maths Talent Quest, MANSW Mathematical Investigations, and ICAS Mathematics Medal, 2020
- > 1st & 2nd in Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards, 2020
- > Silver Award, NESA WriteOn, 2020
- > Gold, Silver & Bronze Medals in CIS athletics, 2019
- > Redeemer alumnus Institution of Engineers Bradfield Student Engineer of the Year Award, 2020

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Antonio Rajaratnam (HSC, 2020) with Headmaster Russell Bailey being awarded the 2021 Parramatta City Junior Citizen of the Year Award from the Mayor

5 Interior Design Trends for 2021

Isabella Ross

Original Style



Smooth Surfaces

With 'COVID-normal' the catch phrase of 2020 and likely to continue into 2021, many of us have taken numerous cleanliness precautions. It is therefore no wonder that smooth, easy-clean surfaces are in high demand now! Easy to wipe surfaces in the kitchen are key. Wood is porous, meaning bacteria can exist quite happily in it. That is why it is best to stick with non-porous countertop materials in the kitchen. To discover more about what surface material would work best for your home, look to local North Shore kitchen design experts.

Top Drawer



Global Influence

Given international travel is on the back burner for a while longer, now is the perfect time to display some treasures from your prior expeditions. Shelving, coffee tables, bookcases, shadow boxes, bedside tables – there are so many great spots for souvenirs. Rugs or lanterns from the Middle East, hand blown glass from Venice or antique finds in London alleyways – you name it! Plus, there is always a really nice story behind each piece which is sure to conjure fond memories.

Mineheart



Ultimate Grey

Pantone's Colour of the Year is officially Ultimate Grey. The best thing about this hue is that it can pair beautifully with such a wide variety of interior styles, additional colours and room sizes. Not to mention it's a really nice and simple wall colour that isn't too much for a space, meaning it won't distract from the rest of your design.

Maximalism

With minimalism a hit in interior design for the last decade, now is the time to embrace the showcase! Pairing lovely with the Global Influence trend, now is the time to put your favourite mementoes on display – be loud and proud. Not only will this maximalist influence show your personality, the space will also have a unique flair too.

The French Bedroom Co



Regency Modern

Netflix's *Bridgerton*, a Regency-era romance television series, has been labelled one of the most watched shows on the platform (63 million and counting). Understandably, the period-style aesthetic has ultimately been a hit with audiences. Interiors are set to take inspiration from this Regency revival but of course with a modern twist. Consider curved arms and legs, dark wood washes, wainscoting and lovely lighting.

Carla Dinnage Ceramics



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Midgen Berry (*Austromyrtus dulcis*)



Great Bush Tucker

Brian Roach

It's a wonderful thing that over the past decade or so, those of us from non-Indigenous backgrounds have become increasingly aware of the enormous wealth of knowledge possessed by the traditional guardians of our paradise on the planet. Recent catastrophic events have forced a rethink on how we manage the land in various respects, and this has obviously involved an increasing input by the First Nations People.

There's a wealth of great bush tucker but one of my favourites is a wonderful, low-growing plant that produces scrumptious berries around January/February. Its common name has a few variations, but Midgen Berry is often used while the botanical name is *Austromyrtus dulcis*. It grows naturally up the North Coast and places like Fraser Island are covered in it. I have to admit it's not one to particularly grow for the flowers; they are small and white and are produced around December. Having said that, the foliage is quite attractive with the new growth being of a lovely copper colour. But the more flowers, the more the berries. I simply love to gather handfuls of the berries and pop them on my cereal in late January and February. The taste is neither sweet nor sour so make of that what you will. It's a low-growing plant to no more than 40cm high and will get a spread of up to a couple of metres and is an effective groundcover. It's happy in full sun to quite heavy shade and seems to flower and fruit in any conditions. The only 'pest' I've encountered is with the Regent Bower Bird which also loves the fruit.

Years ago, I was asked to supply some tube stock to a grower of blueberries and was happy to do so. I followed up that request by contacting the Rural Industries Development Authority which was then a Commonwealth Agency and when I asked if anyone was growing the plant commercially for the fruit,



the answer I got was "no, and I can understand why not." I suspect the answer lies in the fact that when the fruit is ready to collect it's fairly soft and really has to be gathered by hand. Tumblers are available by contacting Westleigh Native Plants at westleighnativeplants@gmail.com

Brian Roach spent his professional life as Crown Prosecutor/Barrister before retiring. Brian runs a cottage industry native plant nursery from his home in Westleigh, as well as being a member of the Australian Plants Society.

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GO CUCKOO for these Clocks

Isabella Ross

Regardless of technology always being a touch away, it is still incredibly handy, not to mention a design showstopper, to have a clock in your home. Whether for the living room or bedside table, take inspiration from these fabulous clock creations.



Oh Clocks

Roman Numerals

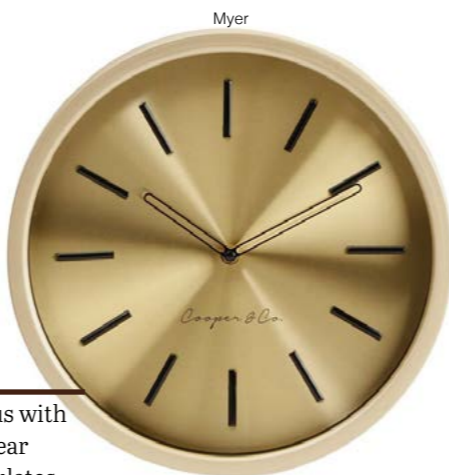
Isn't this piece just amazing! It would look incredible against a bold-coloured wall, especially in an antique, industrial or eclectic interior.



Clock Canvas

Country-Style

For homes that have a farmhouse, country chic or coastal interior theme, this style of clock will work brilliantly in the space.



Myer

Modern Edge

Contemporary homes are synonymous with sleek design, metallic accents and linear patterns – exactly what this clock emulates.



Classic Alarm

We are loving this funky alarm clock with its classic design and a bit of contemporary flair – both practical and stylish.

Annabel James

Indoor Air Plants

Isabella Ross

It sounds too good to be true – an air plant, not requiring much attention yet still looks lovely and lush. But it is a botanical dream that is a reality as well.

Terrarium

Since air plants don't need soil to grow, there is no need to put soil in the bottom of your terrarium. Instead, you can consider coarse sand, small rocks, shells, bark – you name it. Having little moisture in your base is key – that is why soil isn't a good idea, so be sure that whatever you put in the base is dry.



Easy To Grow Bulbs



Etsy

Hanging Plant

As discussed in previous issues of *Sydney Observer*, vertical gardens continue to be incredibly popular in the garden industry. Lots of fun gardening shops sell vertical planters like the one shown in this image. All you have to do is secure your air plant in place and allow room for the plant to grow through the gaps of the hanger. Some simple translucent fishing line will do the trick.



Driftwood

Interestingly, many air plant varieties grow well on pieces of wood. In their natural habitat, air plants commonly grow in the grooves of tree branches – that is why driftwood works so well when styling your air plant. You can just use a bit of translucent fishing line to secure them! Plus, you can find the driftwood yourself while walking on the beach, making the final product something you can be immensely proud of creating.

Care Guide

Air plants (tillandsias) are such an incredible variety. Given they are a type of epiphyte – they grow on things, clinging to tree branches for example as they don't have a root system. Most air plants need to be watered once a week and the process is as follows – place your plants in a tub, sink or bowl of water, enough to submerge the plant. Let them soak for half an hour. Once done, take them out to rest on a towel and let them air dry. From here they can be returned to their usual spot. Some varieties, mainly the green ones, can be misted daily to help keep them looking fresh as well.



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Photos: Freepix

Connection and Socialisation for Locals

Isabella Ross

‘A sweet friendship refreshes the soul’ (Proverbs 27:9).

Socialisation and connection are at the heart of maintaining a healthy mental and emotional disposition. *Sydney Observer* has collated a list of ways for seniors to either maintain or create friendships, particularly in COVID-normal times.

ONLINE DATING

Whether it is Elite Singles, Silver Singles, eHarmony – there seems to be numerous online dating platforms specialised for older adults. For many, romantic companionship is an important part of life. So, for those missing that connection or looking to find their penguin, give online dating a go. Just be sure to stay safe, take your time and enlist the help and advice of loved ones.

ZOOM TALKS AND WEBINARS

In this COVID-normal universe, Zoom is such a great platform to keep informed and socialise with like-minded individuals. Many of the local councils around us run a variety of webinars that you can join for free including ones to do with gardening, hobbies, local resources, sustainability, networking and more. (Example: Ryde and Ku-ring-gai Councils).



SCHOOL REUNIONS

Whether it is primary school, high school, university or college, there are a bunch of old friends that you could always reconnect with. Look to social platforms such as Facebook or even email to rekindle a friendship. In the future when bigger events are on the table, see about organising an alumni get-together.

LOCAL CLUBS

Rotary, Lions, Hornsby CWA, Ku-ring-gai Historical Society, North Shore Australian Plants Society – there are so many local clubs to consider getting involved in. If you are religious, there are also plenty of churches, mosques, synagogues and temples where you can

meet like-minded people as well.

FREE EDUCATIONAL COURSES

Open University has a range of free courses that could interest you, including ones on language, the arts, money and business, the environment, society and politics, health and more. You can chat with fellow mature-age students, feel like you are achieving something worthwhile and expand your knowledge – win/win!

RSL AND SPORTS CLUBS

Get moving, make some mates and support local. We are blessed where we live that there are such an array of sporting and RSL clubs for us to choose from. For a list of North Shore walking groups, read a free digital copy of *Sydney Observer's* December/January issue. A list of great local bowls clubs can also be found in the November issue.

LOVED ONES

There is nothing quite better than a simple catch up with a loved one – friend, work colleague, family or neighbour. Whoever it is, it undeniably makes a world of difference to spend time with someone you connect well with, even if it is just for a walk or cup of tea – try initiating a meet-up, they will appreciate it.



Are you wishing to downsize to a welcoming and supportive community, while at the same time having the choice to either live independently or to avail yourself of the wonderful services which are offered?

“The Cotswolds” Village in North Turramurra provides an array of facilities within beautifully landscaped gardens and an opportunity to make new friends.

There is an indoor heated pool, billiards room, a pleasant lounge room and a dining room. A registered nurse is on-site 24/7.

Please note that currently some of the amenities are closed due to Covid-19 restrictions, but hopefully these will be lifted in the near future.

There are several styles of accommodation available in the village:

- Studio serviced apartments
- One-bedroom serviced apartments
- One-bedroom self-care units
- Two-bedroom one-bathroom self-care units
- Two-bedroom two-bathroom self-care units

“The Cotswolds” is a quality Mirvac development for “over 55’s” which has enjoyed an enviable reputation for 37 years.

Importantly, there are No Deferred Management or Exit Fees and residents retain 100% of any capital gain on the sale of the property.

Due to Covid-19 Safe Guidelines, **it is essential to make an appointment to inspect.**

We are available seven days a week and are happy to accommodate requests for out-of-business hours inspections.

Please call Julie at Turramurra North Real Estate on 9449 3075 or on her mobile 0418 606 006.



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Your Local Community Agent

Seniors What's On

Beekeeping Workshop

Dr Tim Heard will share his expert knowledge and passion for native bees, with the workshop including demonstrations of splitting hives and how to assess the health of a hive.

Date: 7th February

Time: 9:30am – 4pm

Where: Willoughby Council Depot, Chatswood

Cost: \$40

http://bit.ly/Beekeeping_feb



Clothing Repair Workshop

Tune into a practical workshop with the Bower technicians as they demonstrate clothing repair techniques such as fixing zippers, buttons, holes and thorned fabrics.

Date: 13th February

Time: 11am – 12pm

Where: Online Via Zoom

Cost: Free

http://bit.ly/ClothingRepair_feb



Seniors Visit to Hyde Park Barracks & Drummoyne

Immerse yourself in Sydney's history at Hyde Park Barracks. Then enjoy lunch overlooking the harbour at Drummoyne Sailing Club afterwards.

Date: 18th February

Time: 9:15am – 3pm

Where: Meet at Marian Street Theatre car park, Killara

Cost: \$40

<http://bit.ly/HideParkBarracks>

World Film Club – 'La Dolce Vita'

Join Hornsby's free online film club where a new film is discussed each month, ranging from award winning films, documentaries and popular world cinema.

Date: 22nd February

Time: 1pm

Where: Online Via Zoom

Cost: Free

http://bit.ly/DolceVita_feb

Seniors Visit to Ken Duncan Gallery & Copacabana

Browse Ken Duncan's expansive, purpose-built gallery along with its landscaped gardens, followed by morning tea at the café then driving to Copacabana for lunch by the sea.

Date: 1st March

Time: 8:45am – 3:30pm

Where: Meet at Marian Street Theatre car park, Killara

Cost: \$40

<http://bit.ly/KenDuncanGallery-feb>



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3 Foods for Digestion

Digestion can be a pain in the gut for some. If you are struggling with your digestion, consider trying these 3 foods (along with consulting your GP).

OATS

According to the Gastroenterological Society of Australia, we should be consuming at least 30 grams of fibre per day. Nutritionist Dr Joanna Mcmillan notes that when it comes to 'superfoods' the one ticking all the boxes is oats. Packed with fibre, oats are a great breakfast food that also keep you fuller for longer.

PEPPERMINT TEA

Do you have tummy trouble after eating? You are not alone! Interestingly, peppermint tea has been used for centuries in ancient civilisations as a natural remedy to help ease digestion and IBS-related symptoms. Even better, it is naturally free of caffeine, so you can have one after dinner.

PRUNES

For those who are not regular, consider following the age-old advice of 3 prunes a day. Not only are they abundant in fibre, they are also a great source of potassium. A recent study (National Library of Medicine, 2019) saw that participants who consumed prunes for four weeks saw improvements to their bowel function.



Don't Wait Until It's Too Late

Bowel cancer – it's one of the diseases we feel least comfortable discussing. Yet it is more important than ever to have that awkward conversation with a loved one and encourage one another to get screened.

Estimated to be the 4th most commonly diagnosed cancer in 2020, the risk of developing bowel cancer increases with age, with the majority of colorectal cancers occurring in those over 50. Bowel cancer risk is increased by smoking, eating an excessive amount of red meat, processed meats, drinking alcohol and being overweight or obese. Age, family history, hereditary conditions and associated illness history can also influence an individual's risk.

A reminder that seniors or people over 50 are eligible to receive a taxpayer funded faecal immunochemical test in the mail which is part of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program.

<https://www.bowelcanceraustralia.org/national-bowel-cancer-screening-program>



Dr Sue Ferguson is an Honorary Associate Lecturer in the Department of Psychology at Macquarie University.

Coping with Chronic Illness

Dr Sue Ferguson

Having a chronic illness is hard work some days. Coming to terms with the symptoms and their impact on everyday functioning can be stressful, especially if you have more than one illness (as many older adults do). Getting reliable information and support are vital, and <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/> is a good place to start. Many common illnesses have organisations which, as well as being a good source of information, also provide support to those with the illness and their families (such as Arthritis NSW and Parkinson's Australia). Support groups with members with the same illness or symptoms are a big help. Also, I recommend: *Living a healthy life with chronic conditions* by Dr Kate Lorig and colleagues, a book which has useful information on self-management of a range of chronic conditions.

Also be an active self-manager of your illness, as this helps both your physical and mental health.



Self-management includes attending professional appointments (such as physiotherapy), managing medications, changing the way you carry out day-to-day tasks, and also making changes to your exercise, diet and thoughts. Accepting the need to use assistive devices, to get home modifications, or help from carers, are also common challenges.

A third of those with a chronic illness become depressed, so learn to manage your emotions too. Talk over your physical and emotional challenges with friends, family and your GP. Ask if you need a referral to a medical specialist, or to a health psychologist if you need help setting up new habits to cope with the illness or its emotional effects.

Learning what you can control and what you need to accept is important and will help you thrive again. As Michael J. Fox said, "I don't have any choice whether I have Parkinson's, but surrounding that non-choice is a million other choices that I can make."



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Artist's impression



Artist's impression



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Where: Pennant Hills Bowling Club, 52 Yarrara Rd

Limited spaces, bookings essential

Visit uniting.org/normanhurst-event or call 1800 864 846

Free seminar

Uniting

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Tips for a Safe Ride

Rejimon Punchayil

A mobility scooter user is deemed to be a pedestrian under the NSW Road Rules. A survey jointly conducted by ACCC, NRMA, Choice and EnableNSW found that about 95% of trips on a mobility scooter involve no injury or damage of any kind. It is reassuring to learn from the same survey that 93% of the users have chosen to use a mobility scooter to maintain independence and improved mobility.

It is important that you buy your scooter from an experienced provider who can guide you, but who can also assess whether the potential user is capable enough to manage and use the scooter safely.



Safety Tips

(RTA's Guide to Using Motorised Wheelchairs)

- Take extra care when leaving the kerb to cross the road.
- Attach a safety flag and at night use light and reflectors to improve the visibility.
- Avoid highways, major roads and other areas used by heavy vehicles.
- Always be prepared to stop.
- If in doubt about a route, you can contact the local council's Access Committee, who can provide information to plan a safer trip.

In the meantime, if you want to test drive a scooter, check out www.comfortdiscovered.com



CWA's Ultimate Strawberry Jam

Recipe courtesy of Country Women's Association NSW

Ingredients

- 1kg ripe strawberries cut into halves (or can use Australian frozen strawberries)
- 150g peeled and cored green apple, grated or finely diced
- 1 large lemon, juiced and fine zest of half
- 850g regular white sugar

Hint: if required, wash strawberries before the stalks are removed or they will absorb water and their taste and texture will be affected.

Method

1. Place strawberries, lemon juice and zest into your preserving pan. Bring to the boil, lower to a good simmer and cook until fruit has cooked through and just starting to break up. Add sugar and without boiling, stir until thoroughly dissolved.
2. Quickly bring mixture to the boil and cook until setting point (105°C) is reached: approximately 20-25 mins. Start testing from around 15 mins to ensure a good set without overcooking.
3. Remove from heat and allow to stand for 8-10 mins. In addition, remove any scum from the surface at this stage.
4. Bottle into hot sterilised jars and seal immediately. Store for 9-12 months in cool, dark spot. Refrigerate once opened and use within around 6 weeks.

Dementia Café Project

As many of us know all too well, dementia is a really challenging disease. For locals who either have the condition or their family carers working hard to support them, there is an initiative bringing socialisation and comfort back into their lives. D-caf is a program that translates to Dementia Café – a joint project run by Ku-ring-gai Council, Rotary, Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre and YMCA.

D-caf provides a place for people living with dementia and their family carers to socialise and relax, with morning teas, conversations, information, light exercise sessions and guest speakers included weekly. Apart from purchasing your own coffee, joining the group is free.

Locations

- Ku-ring-gai Fitness and Aquatic Centre, West Pymble, each Tuesday from 9:30am – 11:30am.
- Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre, St Ives, each Wednesday from 10am – 12pm.
- PCYC Hornsby/Ku-ring-gai Centre, Waitara, each Thursday from 10am – 12pm.

Booking is essential. For further information contact council's Aged Service Coordinator on 9424 0970, or email Info.Rotary.DCaf@gmail.com

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Image is for illustrative purposes only. Correct as at February 2021. 5828A

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One of our great off-leash dog parks on the North Shore.

New Local Dog Parks to Come

The more the merrier when it comes to additional dog parks popping up across the Upper North Shore area! Hornsby Shire Council recently unveiled its draft Off-Leash Dog Park Strategy, identifying eight potential new dog parks – along with the proposed expansion of two existing ones.

will also hopefully decrease the number of dogs that are let off the leash in areas that are not appropriate,” said Hornsby Shire Mayor Philip Ruddock.

Interestingly Australia has one of the highest pet ownership rates in the world, with approximately 61% of Aussie households owning a furry friend. Even more reason why additional dog parks are great news for local dog owners.

“Dog off-leash areas are an important part of council’s recreational infrastructure and there is currently a shortage of them within the local area. We are determined to increase both their number and capacity, giving more dog owners the opportunity to let their companions stretch their legs. Doing this

Things to Remember When at the Dog Park

1. Pick your playmates.
2. Keep an eye on your dog.
3. Always ask yourself, “is your furry friend suited to an off-leash park?”
4. Choose the right time to go, i.e. would a less busy time better suit your dog?
5. Remember to bring waste bags.



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Hans Reniers/Unsplash



Beat the Heat

RSPCA NSW sent a vital message to *Sydney Observer* readers, asking all pet owners to keep their pets cool, hydrated, and safe during the last weeks of summer.

Tips To Keep your Pet Safe

- If possible, bring your pets indoors during heatwaves.
- Do not leave pets unattended in locked cars.
- If pets are outdoors, it is important to provide access to shaded areas to protect your pets from the sun (i.e. install shade cloths and umbrellas or plant tall native flora in the garden).
- Remember to apply pet-friendly zinc to the ears and noses of pets prone to sunburn, including cats and dogs with white fur or pink noses.
- Ensure access to plenty of fresh water, providing multiple sources for them to drink from in cool places.
- Avoid exercising dogs in the middle of the day as this can lead to heat stress. Their feet pads can burn on hot surfaces such as cement and sand.



Dr Ian Sweeney is a dental surgeon at Northside Dental & Implant Centre, Turrumurra.

COVID-19 and Dentistry

Dr Ian Sweeney

Even before COVID-19, the rate of dental decay in Australia was increasing, particularly in children. Australian figures show approximately 33% of children less than 5 years of age have dental decay in their baby teeth, while approximately 50% of children aged 12 have experienced dental decay in at least one permanent tooth.

Dental decay in children can progress rapidly and may require hospitalisation to treat the associated infections. In Australia, approximately 26,000 hospital admissions are required annually to treat dental decay, making it the leading cause of preventable hospitalisations in Australian children.

A recent study has analysed Australian Government data on dental services provided to children during the height of COVID-19 in 2020. Dental practices were heavily restricted during the lockdown period, restricting their ability to diagnose and treat active dental disease. As a result, the authors have predicted “poorer oral health outcomes in the next 6 to 12 months at least.” Apart from the delay in seeking regular preventive dental check-up appointments, lockdown and home schooling may have altered our daily regular brushing routine and may have increased the opportunity for more frequent snacking.

With this in mind, it is important that we start the new school year with a healthy dental diet. Remember there are many hidden snacks in your child’s diet. Class birthday cupcakes and other snacks from

school friends will easily creep into your child’s diet, without you being aware. Health foods may not always be healthy from a dental point of view as well. Many snack bars are very high in sugar and contain ingredients such as chocolate and dried fruits that may stick to teeth for a long time, increasing the risk of decay. Other foods such as biscuits, crackers and potato chips have the potential to lead to dental decay. Likewise, sipping juice or frozen juice bottles, although refreshing, will also prolong the food source for decay-causing bacteria. Water remains the best option for a refreshing drink.

For a healthy snack, fruits like mini cucumbers, carrots and tiny tomatoes are good alternatives. Cheese sticks also provide large amounts of much-needed calcium. Cheddar, swiss and mozzarella all stimulate saliva glands to clear the mouth of debris. Saliva helps to protect teeth by neutralising acid produced after eating sugary snacks.

Back to school may also mean back to sport. Mouthguards are one of the simplest ways to protect your child’s teeth. Even children as young as 7 have the potential to damage their permanent teeth and should be wearing a mouth guard. There are many types of mouthguards available depending on the age and sport involved. Your dentist is the best person to give advice on which one is most suitable for your child. Lastly, don’t forget to floss! Dental flossing of teeth is the only way to prevent holes forming in between teeth and children need to brush and floss twice daily. It is recommended this is supervised by an adult until the child reaches the age of 12.

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ASMR Explained

Isabella Ross

Perhaps you have heard of ASMR – it has taken the world by storm, but what exactly is it? Autonomous sensory meridian response (ASMR) is a type of tingling and relaxing sensation that occurs across the body in response to certain sounds. Whether it is popping bubble wrap, scratching, tapping on glass, the crinkle of paper, the sound of rain or even gentle whispering, there is such a wide array of unique sounds that many find very soothing to listen to.

SO, WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS?

The therapeutical benefits are clear when it comes to listening or watching ASMR videos, but there are also psychological profits to it too. Studies have shown that ASMR has been associated with a reduced heart rate, as well as significant increases in positive emotions (*University of Sheffield, 2018*). It has also been seen to help insomnia sufferers be able to wind down and sleep easier. So if you are ever feeling a little anxious, cannot sleep or need a bit of de-stressing, why not have a listen of ASMR and see if it is for you!

WHERE TO FIND ASMR CONTENT

YouTube appears to be the home of ASMR videos, with something to suit all. If you feel the visuals are unnecessary, you can also just listen to an ASMR podcast on Spotify or

The Conversation



Apple Music. On a similar wavelength is the television show *A World of Calm*, available on SBS. The program is described as a “slow TV experience where audiences step into a world designed to unwind and relax.” Essentially, each episode follows a unique story through vivid visuals and evocative narrative by some of Hollywood’s elite including Kate Winslet, Nicole Kidman, Lucy Lui, Idris Elba, Zoe Kravitz and more. The narration is really soft and slow and when paired with visuals such as glass making or birds migrating, the overall effect is incredibly comforting to watch.

WHO

Mask Up

With mask wearing on the rise, it is important to know what type is best to wear. As noted on the NSW Health website, the main value of wearing a mask is to protect other people. If used correctly, masks may prevent sick people from infecting others.

SINGLE USE MASKS

Reputable single use masks can be bought from supermarkets and chemists. Use masks made with a non-woven, melt blown polypropylene layer. NSW Health warns not to use masks with holes or a valve. The one downside to this variety is that it can be expensive to keep replenishing your stock, given they are single use.

REUSABLE CLOTH MASKS

Cloth masks are also effective in reducing transmission, when worn correctly and of the correct fabric. For adequate protection, cloth masks should have at least three layers of fabric:

1. **The outer layer** should be a water-resistant polyester or polypropylene



fabric such as a reusable supermarket bags (not plastic) or exercise clothing.

2. **The middle layer** should be high-grade cotton (such as bed sheets), polycotton (such as quilting fabric or a t-shirt).

3. **The inner layer** should be high-grade cotton (such as bed sheets) or polycotton (such as quilting fabric or a t-shirt).

For a full list of places where mask-wearing is required, keep an eye on www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/face-masks

Further tips on mask wearing and purchasing can be found on WHO.

www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks

Beauty Corner

Amy Sandig

Amy is a North Shore local and social media consultant with a particular interest in health and beauty. See Amy on Instagram @amy.sandig

Multi-Vitamin Serums

The focus for 2021 is towards minimalist skincare regimes and multi-purpose products. Look for vitamin-rich serums that moisturize and hydrate your skin and cleansing facial treatments that you can use in one go. Cult favourites for peptide and probiotic rich serums include ‘Buffet’ by The Ordinary or popular ‘SK-II Facial Treatment Essence,’ available at local North Shore retailers including Priceline, Sephora and David Jones.



that are easy to blend. For a neutral pop of colour try the Babassu Oil Eyeliner pencil by RAWW Cosmetics in the colour ‘coffee bronze.’ Or go bold with the Zuii Organic Eyeliner Pencil in ‘emerald.’

Probiotic Skincare

Take a holistic approach to skin health. With research suggesting that by adding beneficial bacteria to your skin’s microflora, the skin’s natural defences are enhanced. This allows for increased hydration and better protection from external environmental toxins and sun exposure. Furthermore, it progressively fine tunes your skin’s natural eco system and ensuring less breakouts, redness and skin irritation, strengthening skin texture. Get your probiotic fix with Dermalogica ‘Clear Start Clearing Defence’ or the Elizabeth Arden ‘Superstart Probiotic Cleanser’



Defined Eyes

Glowing skin and bright illuminous eyes are always in style! Achieving this has never been easier. Enhance your natural eye colour and add some subtle definition to your eye makeup with the use of coloured eyeliner pencils. Choose either a sparkly gold or warm, earthy tones

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2021 Relationship Reboot

Sarah Wainwright

Catching up for a dog walk and coffee with my friend Catherine Simes, Psychologist and School Counsellor at The Kings School, we found ourselves talking about love, marriage and romantic relationships! Cath mentioned *The Five Love Languages* and how useful they are to consider in relationships. The original intention of *The Love Language* theory is learning each other's love languages and modifying one's own behaviour accordingly.

"In my work as a counsellor and psychologist, I've found *The Five Love Languages* is a really powerful way to help clients understand their partner (or children, friends and family members) better. It has been my experience personally and professionally that using and understanding these can be a fast track to restoring lost intimacy, warmth and good will to any relationship. Understanding your partner's love languages (we are all a mix of all five, but usually have a couple of 'primary' ones), is simpler than it sounds, and doesn't require much detective work," notes Cath.

THE FIVE LOVE LANGUAGES BY DR GARY CHAPMAN

- 1. Words of Affirmation:** saying kind, affirming words to your partner; helping them to feel noticed, appreciated and valued, and includes saying, 'I love you'.
- 2. Acts of Service:** love is expressed by remembering and doing things that require thought, time and effort; simple actions that you know your partner would love, such as cooking a meal or picking up supplies on your way home.
- 3. Gift Giving:** thoughtful gifts that help make your partner feel loved, understood and appreciated.
- 4. Quality Time:** this is about your undivided attention, without distractions, (screen-free-time). This is time made exclusively for

them, sharing or doing something together and being fully present. **5. Physical Touch:** feeling connected and safe in a relationship, enhanced by physical contact, such as holding hands, a back rub and hugging.

"The best way to understand your own, or anyone else's love language is to look at what you/they tend to do or give. For instance, if you tend to give gifts, they're probably meaningful to you and something you really appreciate," Cath details. "It may hurt when your loved ones don't go to the same thought and effort when presenting you with a gift. On the other hand, if they frequently say kind, supportive things to you, then words of affirmation are probably something they really want or need from you. Meeting those needs and wants, albeit communicated non-verbally, can make the world of difference to a relationship."

"The great thing about this 'tool' is that it's free! It doesn't require a conversation if things are tense, just start by doing or giving a couple of the things they tend to do or give to others. If you want to make inroads in a challenging relationship or you want your loved one to feel loved, invest in trying some of these simple but powerful relationship rescue remedies... and watch your investment bear fruit!"

In the words of Dr Julie Gottman, "paying attention to a partner's needs and wants and acting accordingly results in a better relationship." (Fetters, A., *The Atlantic*, 2019).

Sarah Wainwright, BSc (Psychology), Postgraduate Diploma (Psychology), Writer, Third Culture Kid, wife and mother of 4. Sarah is a Sydney-based parenting expert and shares her experience and observations on Instagram @_parentingtips_

IS CHARCOAL the New Black?

Isabella Ross



FOOD

Interestingly, charcoal has become a popular addition included within café meals, whether it be burgers, pancakes and even lattes. But where charcoal can really shine is when it comes to meats. A charcoal grill is a great approach when trying to add smoky flavour to a dish. "When it comes to cooking meats, slow cooking in a charcoal grill can produce a really good result. Lots of flavour can come from it – depth, taste, smokiness. You have to be patient on time though, as it does take a while for it to develop. The cleaning also takes a lot of work!" comments Executive Chef, John Ross.

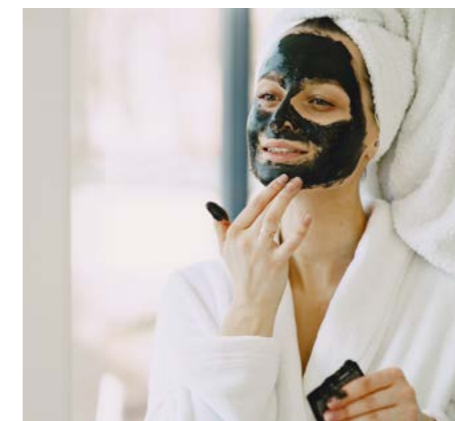


TOOTHPASTE

Charcoal has been used for a long time in various dental products, due to its mild abrasive nature, removing stains and absorbing some noxious odours arising in the mouth. Yet the efficacy of using charcoal-based products in the mouth remains unclear, as further noted by our resident dentist Dr Ian Sweeney. "A paper published in the *British Dental Journal* in 2019 concluded there appeared to be a lack of scientific data to support the use of many charcoal-containing dental products. The paper reported charcoal may actually reduce the effect of fluoride in toothpastes due to the adsorptive capacity of activated charcoal. Abrasive qualities of the charcoal remained a concern, as did the possibility of gum staining or root staining. They also differentiate between whitening and bleaching of teeth. They concluded the majority of these products did not intrinsically affect tooth colour, rather act by removing surface stain," says Dr Sweeney from Northside Dental & Implant Centre. With this in mind, it is probably best to leave charcoal out of the equation when cleaning your teeth.

SKINCARE

Detoxifying and purifying one's clogged pores, charcoal masks are all the rage lately. The theory behind activated charcoal is that since it can bring out certain things when put in contact with something, the substance may do the same for the skin – drawing out the nasties in our face. Although it is important to note that there is not a significant amount of scientific research to back up this claim. However, it makes for a unique coloured skincare mask, doesn't appear to have any serious side effects according to *Popular Science* and can be an enjoyable step to add to your skincare routine. These skincare goodies can come in a range of formats, including a clay mask, peel-off mask and sheet mask. Reputable products to try include Biore Deep Charcoal Cleanser (\$7.70) Clinique City Block Purifying Charcoal Clay Mask + Scrub (\$56) and Sephora Charcoal Sheet Mask (\$8).



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Down South to Bega Valley

Isabella Ross

Bega Valley, also known as The Sapphire Coast, is a melting pot of beauty, with sights to see ranging from bushland, countryside, quaint townships and stunning coastlines. Sadly, a significant amount of this area was affected by the Summer Bushfires in 2019/20, and along with COVID-19, there has been a major economic impact felt by the NSW Far South Coast community. That is why it is a great idea to plan a trip to Bega Valley – as you will be supporting local businesses and enjoying a getaway. Starting off in Bega, the town is known for its sweeping green hillsides, excellent dairy farming and home to many historical buildings. Next on the list is Tathra, a small seaside town known for its great swimming and fishing spots. Merimbula is another great beach spot to see, loved by both locals and visitors for its fresh seafood.

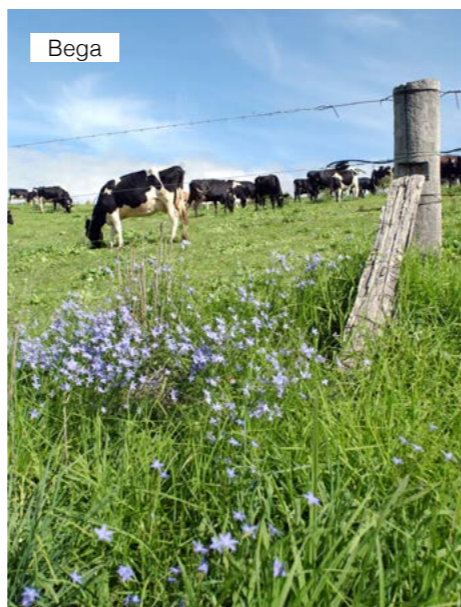
THINGS TO DO

Art galleries, road trips, eating and drinking local produce, shopping, exploring lush landscapes or taking part in some outdoor adventures – there is such an abundance of things to do across the Bega Valley. As

always, planning your trip ahead is a good idea, particularly as there are often great local events happening – to see visit www.sapphirecoast.com.au/activities/

FURTHER INCENTIVE

The NSW Government's economic stimulus program Dine & Discover is set to create a boost for dining, arts and tourism businesses. The program will be rolled out in The Rocks and in Broken Hill in early February and in late February it will expand to the Northern Beaches, Sydney CBD and Bega Valley. Every NSW resident aged 18 and over will be eligible for four \$25 vouchers worth \$100 in total, to spend in participating businesses. The vouchers will be divided into two categories. Two \$25 vouchers can be used for eating in at restaurants, cafes, bars, pubs and clubs from Monday to Thursday, excluding public holidays. In addition, two \$25 vouchers can be used for entertainment and recreation, including cultural institutions, live music, and arts venues, available 7 days a week, excluding public holidays. This is even more incentive to get the family together and go on a road trip to Bega Valley. To participate in Dine & Discover NSW, you must have a **MyServiceNSW** account.



HOME BAKING

Cherry Custard Tart

Isabella Ross

Food has always been at the heart of my household. Having an Executive Chef as a father, I have always loved to try new recipes. A great hobby to consider, baking and cooking is also a fun (yet often messy) activity to do with the kids. Cherish the last weeks of summer by celebrating the fruit of the season in this delicious dessert recipe.

Ingredients

- 1 cup crème fraiche
- 2 eggs
- 1 ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon of cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons white sugar
- 500g of fresh cherries
- 1 punnet of fresh raspberries
- Pastry shell

For the pastry shell, it is up to you whether you would like to purchase a pre-made shell or make the pastry dough yourself. If making from scratch, look to Sweet Shortcrust Pastry recipes from Jamie Oliver or Donna Hay.



Method

1. Preheat your oven to 200°C, and line a tray with baking paper. Place your tart shell on the tray and leave on your benchtop.
2. In a stand mixer or food processor using a low-speed setting, mix together the crème fraiche, vanilla extract, sugar, cinnamon and eggs. Whip until the mixture has a custard consistency. Using a spatula, fold the raspberries into the custard, breaking up a few so that there is plenty of raspberry pods throughout the mixture. Be sure to leave 7 raspberries aside, as these will be used during decoration.
3. Pour the custard into your tart carefully, making sure that it is almost full to the brim, without spilling over the edges. Put the tart into the oven and bake for 20 – 30 minutes, or until the custard is wobbly yet set, and the shell is golden brown.
4. While waiting for the tart to bake, wash and de-pit the cherries. Using a serrated knife, carve the circumference of the cherry and twist the two sides apart, revealing the pit in the middle. These cherries will now be pitted and halved, soon to be used for decoration on the tart.
5. Once the tart is out of the oven, let it cool on the bench before placing in the fridge for an hour. Once done, take out the tart and begin to layer the halved cherries across the top of the tart, making two layers in total. When finishing the second layer, leave room in the middle to place the additional 7 raspberries in the centre, finishing off the cherry custard tart.





Tyrannosaurs Exhibition

Travel back 66 million years in this unique Tyrannosaur family interactive exhibition at the Australian Museum. This summer the world's most feared dinosaur, Tyrannosaurus rex, comes crashing into the museum's new blockbuster – the whole Tyrannosaur clan will be roaring to meet you.

Date: 1st February – 14th March

Time: Varies

Where: The Australian Museum, Darlinghurst

Cost: \$10 kids, \$20 adults

www.australianmuseum.net.au/

Forested Art Exhibition

Artists Jan Handel, Melinda Marshman and Lisa Woolfe present an art exhibition of work in response to the practice of Shinrin-yoku or Forest Bathing. Originating in Japan in the 1980s, Shinrin-yoku refers to the practice of being in nature and connecting with it through our senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch.

Date: 1st February – 20th February

Time: Varies

Where: Grace Cossington Smith Gallery, Wahroonga

Cost: Free

www.gcsgallery.com.au/

Bird Walk Lyrebird Track

A great opportunity to discover local birds and beautiful walking tracks, the guided Lyrebird Track walk is nice and gentle. It starts from the end of the Davidson Reserve picnic area and follows the Lyrebird Track through the bush, along the edge of Middle Harbour Creek.

Date: 4th February

Time: 8am – 10:30am

Where: Davidson Park, Forestville

Cost: Free

www.krg.nsw.gov.au/

Chatswood Year of the Ox Festival

The Chatswood Year of the Ox Festival 2021 returns with exciting new COVID-safe events to celebrate the Lunar New Year. Over four weeks highlights will include art exhibitions, comedy shows, the Golden Market, celebration day cultural performances and much more.

Date: 3rd February – 28th February

Time: Varies

Where: Throughout Willoughby City

Cost: Free

www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au/

Ernani – Opera Australia

Ernani is an outlaw, ready to fight for his honour and die for his ideals. But our hero is caught in a love quadrangle. This opera has intrigue, disguise, betrayal and adventure, like all the best medieval tales.

Date: 2nd February – 13th February

Time: Varies

Where: Joan Sutherland Theatre, Sydney Opera House

Cost: \$79

opera.org.au/productions/ernani

Living with Brush Turkeys

Us North Shore locals are well-accustomed to brush turkeys lurking in our gardens! Join Dr Ann Goeth in an online seminar about this unusual bird, and find out about Brush Turkey behaviour, historical distribution, how to live with them and, if you prefer, how to discourage them from living in your backyard.

Date: 17th February

Time: 6pm – 7pm

Where: Via Zoom

Cost: Free

www.krg.nsw.gov.au/



Tosca – Opera Australia

Tosca has everything: a real and worldly love, an extraordinary heroine and the greatest villain in all of opera. It is a gripping tale of love, lust and betrayal unfolding at breakneck pace.

Date: 22nd February – 13th March

Time: Varies

Where: Joan Sutherland Theatre, Sydney Opera House

Cost: From \$79

opera.org.au/productions/tosca/

'Ernani' opera show



Opera Australia On Stage Once Again

Isabella Ross

There is nothing quite like visiting the incredible Sydney Opera House, particularly after live entertainment experiencing a COVID-induced hiatus. With social distancing and mask wearing in place, Sydneysiders are being welcomed by Opera Australia to support the arts and revel in the talent of their skilled performers. One such artist is Baritone Luke Gabbedy, a Roseville local who has been doing what he loves for over 20 years.

When the company's first show for the season, *The Merry Widow*, played in early to mid-January, the production was incredibly the only opera company in the world performing to a live audience! "I'm so happy to be back performing," Luke says. "We are just really lucky to be living in Australia, firstly to be pretty isolated geographically from the rest of the world, but secondly the fact that all forms of government are coming together to get things sorted so we can get back to some sort of normal. Especially for those of us in the arts industry who have not been able to work, as there are just some jobs you can't do at home like mine! The best part was to see the audience's reaction, as you could tell just how appreciative they were to be back enjoying live entertainment. People really missed having that experience."

"It's the only thing I know how to do, having spent over 20 years perfecting my



Roseville local, Baritone Luke Gabbedy.

craft. Plus, it doesn't feel like a job. I get to do what I enjoy for a living and I haven't had to supplement my income. There is also nothing quite like singing in front of a live audience – just not being able to do that was pretty tough." But Luke also notes that time off stage was also a well-needed break for him. "I've been a full-time singer for at least 15 years, so to have that time off to recuperate was also important."

Getting back to work and preparing for the coming season, Luke details his two-step process. "First is memorisation. So, I start by memorising the music and then I add the words, because mainly the words

aren't actually in English, with French, Italian and German being some of the most common. I'm not fluent in another language, so I spend hours and hours and hours memorising and perfecting language. Then on top of that, the second step is putting it into practise – physical singing practise and working on your vocal technique."

As a North Shore local, Luke also was kind to share with *Sydney Observer* readers some of his favourite spots in the area. "We take our dog for a run at Tunks Park in Northbridge – it's an awesome park in the valley with a view of the harbour. I also love Chatswood as a food spot – noodles, Thai, Chinese you name it we love it!"

Opera Australia's second show of the season *Ernani* opens February 2, with *Tosca* also coming to the Sydney Opera House from February 22. For an incredible live performance experience and to see Luke Gabbedy do what he does best, check out Opera Australia for tickets: opera.org.au/

During the summer break, we ran a competition in conjunction with Opera Australia, with x2 double passes to *The Merry Widow* in early January – and what a performance it was! Readers are encouraged to follow *Sydney Observer* on Instagram (@sydney_observer), where you can stay up to date with future giveaways.



Kerrie Erwin is a Psychic and Medium
pureview.com.au

**INTERESTED
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READING**

Email editor@kamdha.com with your name, D.O.B and question for our resident Clairvoyant Kerrie Erwin.

Welcome to the Age of Aquarius

Kerrie Erwin

As the world enters a new type of evolution, people are becoming not only more open with their views but are also more aware of everything around them as we embrace the cosmic consciousness of the Age of Aquarius. With this new energy on the planet, we are all reaching a personal level of heightened awareness and human consciousness.

For many, the journey involves discipline and practices such as diet, (what you eat you become), yoga, meditation, prayer, kindness, compassion, gratitude, acts of faith and being open to more things outside the square, than ever before. If anything, all people from all walks of life are going through a transitional phase of opening up to far better realities. With any type of shift, people will have experienced feelings with waves of emotion, peace and sometimes anxiety and frustration.

Yet with this awakening, we now have our eyes opened and align with all that is good in the universe through our spiritual practices, meditation, the miracle of prayer, mantras, affirmations and daily exercise. We learn to do this daily because when we sleep, we have spent the time in a space of non-resistance, so we need to clean the slate and program our brains again for positive outcomes, to allow peace and harmony in our lives. This also means forgiving anyone or everyone that has hurt you, letting negative thought forms go and an understanding that anything is possible in our brave new world of exciting possibilities! The good thing is the power of intention will pull your energies into alignment on how you want to live your life and help you live in joy. Universal energy of love is within us all.

Get in touch with Kerrie via pureview.com.au/

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