

# Sydney Observer

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IN PRINT SINCE 1996

WOMEN'S HEALTH WEEK

NET ZERO  
NORTH SHORE

WHAT'S ONLINE  
FOR LOCALS

RESILIENCE  
AMID A  
PANDEMIC

CHATTING WITH  
URZILA CARLSON

Get Crafty with Comedian

**Susie Youssef**

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## From the Editor

With at least another month in lockdown, we wish good physical and mental health for all our readers and all small local businesses.



Remember to keep following government and expert medical advice and if able, book in for your vaccination.

For this September Issue, we spoke to the witty and wonderful Susie Youssef. Our profile with her was both open and honest and quite funny, with Susie sharing her experience of pandemic fatigue and how a bit of craft and creativity can go a long way (12-13). Championing important causes remains key to *Sydney Observer*. With this in mind, we suggest some Ku-ring-gai charities to volunteer with (9), a profile on Women's Health Week (31), and a focus on net zero emissions for the North Shore (8).

With in-house restaurant dining feeling like a lifetime away, our Food & Wine section has some tips and tricks for all home cooks distracting themselves with delicious recipes (27). Additional highlights include our hilarious interview with comedian Urzila Carlson (32), lots of Home and Garden content (17-21), unpacking the supposed generation divide (24) and tips on how to keep resilient amid the pandemic (23).

We hope this September Issue brings you some joy,

*Isabella*

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### Home, Commercial and Bulk Delivery

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# SNIPPETS



Beautiful blooms in Lindfield  
Photo by Fleur Blooms Florist  
@fleurblooms/Instagram

## Lindfield Public's Wall of Dreams

Bringing a small bit of joy to the community is Lindfield Public School's delightful posters lining their Pacific Highway fence. Originally supposed to be part of Education Week, the student's posters have thus far remained up, with each showcasing the prompt 'one day I will be able to...' in a bid to encourage lifelong learning. Aspirations from the kids include dancing on stages around the world, owning a company, writing 100-page fiction novels and becoming a scientist. If you live within 5km of the site, it's well worth paying a visit on your walk.

## Marian Street Theatre Project

Marian Street Theatre's Development Application has been approved, meaning their blueprint design is one step closer to being built. The Killara-based Theatre delivers drama workshops to local young people. The Theatre notes on its Facebook page however there is an additional hurdle – funding the redevelopment. Funds have not yet been allocated by Ku-ring-gai Council, as the "refurbishment is reliant on future asset sales." It will be interesting to see this project and design come to life!

## Ku-ring-gai Bushcare Association Grant

The Ku-ring-gai Bushcare Association recently received \$5000 to create a water quality monitoring program. The funds were given as part of Ku-ring-gai Council's environmental levy grants. "The grants are for relatively small projects, but the cumulative effect on Ku-ring-gai's environment is very positive," Mayor Jennifer Anderson said. Bushcare volunteers do great things for our local environment – a big thank you to them!

## Update to Ku-ring-gai's Waste Services

Ku-ring-gai Council are introducing changes to their clean-up collections as part of a new waste contract, starting from 6<sup>th</sup> September. The new services will include:

- Kerbside collection of electronic waste (e-waste), mattresses, metals for recycling, as part of any booked general waste clean-up.

- Separate bookings for a new bulk green waste collection, which will also be recycled. The bulk green waste collection replaces the mobile chipping service and green waste vouchers issued to fire prone land.

<https://www.krg.nsw.gov.au/Community/Waste-and-recycling>

## Local Boy's Brownie Business

A fantastic feel-good local story, North Shore boy Ariel Sher has shown that entrepreneurial skills can be developed at any age. The 9-year-old has created a delicious brownie business. "He works so hard at it. It's such an example of learning out of the classroom – he has a spreadsheet and is so diligent," Ariel's Mum, Vanessa Sher says. To support Ariel and order some brownies if you live locally within the North Shore, you can purchase an order via his Mum Vanessa on 0404 091 452 (SMS or Call).

## Sydney's Adorable Spoonvilles

Keeping local kids entertained, Spoonvilles have made a resurgence amid lockdown. Initially started in the UK, these tiny villages of decorated plastic or wooden spoons are bringing a smile to many faces. In the last few weeks, we have seen them beginning to pop up all across Sydney, including ones in Artarmon and North Turramurra. Whether it's finding a Spoonville on a walk, or making a village of your own, they are such a lovely way to instil some positivity and creativity.



## Woolies for North Turramurra

*Sydney Observer* recently received confirmation that a Woolworths Metro store is coming to North Turramurra. Known for its village vibe, the response from locals has been quite mixed. The store is being installed in the former premises of Greencross Vets Ku-ring-gai. This is being done by a complying development certificate through a private certifier, so it does not require a Development Application.



## Where to get the Jab Locally

Northern Sydney and Hornsby has been an undeniable triumph when it comes to vaccine rates. Some locations to consider booking a jab at include St Ives Medical Centre, Gordon 7 Day Medical Centre, Lindfield Medical Practice, Kissing Point Road Family Doctors, Pymble Family Doctors and Heritage Medical Practice Wahroonga. In addition, most pharmacies and chemists across the North Shore are also offering vaccines – just call ahead to confirm. To find additional information and nearby vaccination clinics, visit: <https://covid19nearme.com.au/state/nsw/vaccination>



## Education Centre St Ives Showground

A detailed design is being prepared by Council for a new cultural and environmental education centre near St Ives Showground. The project is part of a major upgrade planned for the Showground area. The centre is expected to provide a space for community workshops, seminars and functions, as well as providing a focus for research and protection of Ku-ring-gai's Indigenous heritage. "Importantly the centre will reflect sustainable design principles and be in harmony with its natural surroundings," notes Mayor Jennifer Anderson.

# Focus on Net Zero Emissions for North Shore



Sara Zariello

In the fight to decrease greenhouse gas emissions is a Northern Sydney based not-for-profit organisation spearheading change in the community. *Sydney Observer* spoke with Ursula Hogben, (Co-Founder and Zero Emissions Homes & Transport programs leader from Zero Emissions Sydney North) about what 'net zero' means in our climate and how we can make a change for future generations.

Zero Emissions Sydney North is a NSW incorporated association of local volunteers taking action for a cleaner, greener and safer future in the Northern Beaches and North Shore. They operate in conjunction with the national Beyond Zero Emissions network to initiate and continue the growth of current net zero focused programs. "Our vision is to create a sustainable community for current and future generations. We focus on practical projects helping people, businesses and schools," notes Ursula.

With the current climate crisis, there's an undeniable need for community members to educate and encourage their counterparts to take responsibility for their carbon footprints. In 2015, the United Nations Paris Agreement was ratified with the long-term goal of reducing global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius. Every five years, each country that adopted the historic Agreement is expected to submit or update their Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), a climate action plan to keep stakeholders more ambitious about achieving net zero. Currently, the Climate Action Tracker reports Australia as 'insufficiently' contributing their part to the Paris Agreement, with our current actions only keeping greenhouse emissions in the range of 2 to 3 degrees Celsius – and not in keeping with the Paris Agreement. That is precisely why



Net Zero Emissions Sydney North is fundamentally necessary in creating more opportunities for community members to make greater efforts in reaching this goal.

They launched in October 2019 and their impact has reached over 1000 subscribers to their newsletter/social media, and nearly 100 households switching to renewable energy in the form of solar panels, e-cars or e-bikes. "The energy and passion to become more environmentally sustainable is a delight to behold and the program highlights the value of networking together for a positive outcome," says Mosman Council Mayor, Carolyn Corrigan.

So, what can us everyday Aussies do to make a difference?

"What has the most impact and what do I need to do are questions we're asked frequently," tells Ursula. "We created a Sustainable Living Guide to help solve this, with local info, case studies and links."

## URSULA PROVIDES SOME GREAT TIPS

- Choose net zero superannuation and banking.
- Switch to a renewable energy company.
- Install rooftop solar.
- Download a Sustainable Living Guide: <https://zerosydneynorth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/ZESN.Mosman-Sustainable-Living-Guide.Digital.Final.pdf>
- Sign up to a free program, such as Solar My House, Solar My Business, Zero Emissions Homes, Zero Emissions Schools, Zero Emissions Transport.

[www.zerosydneynorth.org](http://www.zerosydneynorth.org)

## KU-RING-GAI SES UNIT

With the catastrophic summer bushfires of 2019-2020 front of mind, volunteering with the NSW State Emergency Service is a rewarding way to give back to the community amid dangerous weather events. There are lots of volunteer options to choose from. Local units within the Northern Sydney Metro Zone include Ku-ring-gai, Hornsby, Mosman and Ryde SES. <https://www.ses.nsw.gov.au/get-involved/volunteer/>

# Volunteer with Ku-ring-gai Charities

Isabella Ross

September 5<sup>th</sup> is International Day of Charity, and what better way to mark it than showcase some of the many great charities across the North Shore where you can volunteer. As stated by the United Nations, the organiser of International Day of Charity, "volunteerism and philanthropy provide real social bonding and contributes to the creation of inclusive and more resilient societies."

## MEALS ON WHEELS KU-RING-GAI & HORNSBY

Volunteers are required across various levels, and it's a really great way to show your support towards our older Aussies and those with a disability across the North Shore, helping provide independence. Current volunteer positions include admin assistants, delivery drivers, home delivery volunteers and kitchen hands. <https://kmow.org.au/volunteer-with-us/>



## EASY CARE GARDENING

Easy Care Gardening helps maintain the gardens of older people and those who need assistance within the Hornsby, Hunters Hill, Ku-ring-gai and Ryde areas since 1988. The gardening volunteer work is very straightforward and doesn't require much experience, with basic tasks including pruning, sweeping, raking, mulching and weeding. <https://www.easycaregardening.org.au/volunteers/>

## ERYLDENE HISTORIC HOUSE

Conveniently located in Gordon, Eryldene

Historic House has a volunteer training program, given the house has relied on a dedicated group of volunteers since 1977. There are a range of opportunities to showcase your skills including curation and research work, website development, education outreach, gardening, working in the café, cooking and food prep, guiding tours, media liaison, administration, graphic design and more. <https://www.eryldene.org.au/pages/display/volunteers>

## KU-RING-GAI HORNSBY VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Are you unsure where you would like to volunteer, but want to lend a hand locally? Ku-ring-gai Hornsby Volunteer Service offers a referral service matching your skills, time and interests with a volunteer position with a local organisation. You can register your interest via this link to learn of any additional volunteer opportunities that arise: <https://www.krg.nsw.gov.au/Community/Volunteer/Register-for-volunteer-work>

# Local Dog Attacks Rise Amid Lockdown

It's sad to say that amid our current lockdown, Ku-ring-gai Council has seen a substantial increase in local dog attacks since the beginning of the lockdown.

Council staff recently compiled data showing a significant increase in dog attacks during the period of the last few months compared with the same monthly periods in 2019 and 2020. There have been 33 incidents in the 10-week period between 1<sup>st</sup> June – 6<sup>th</sup> August involving dogs showing aggressive behaviour or physically attacking other dogs and people in the Ku-ring-gai area. "It seems because people are working from home, many dogs are not used to having

their owners around so much. When out walking some are displaying overly protective behaviour," notes Mayor Jennifer Anderson. "Ku-ring-gai is lucky to have several off-leash areas for owners to take their pets for a run, but dogs must be under their control at all times outside."

The plea from Ku-ring-gai Council comes amid public commentary from residents via Nextdoor, with concerns being raised on the neighbourhood-oriented app. In our local government area, there are 20 off-leash areas – it is important for local dog owners to remember it is a legal requirement for dogs to be kept on a leash except in designated areas.

# Wahroonga Swim Club closes after 60 years

It's the end of an era for Wahroonga's Bush School Learn to Swim Club, with the team behind the club deciding to close its doors after 60 years. Established as a non-profit community organisation, the BSLTS Club has taught vital water safety and swimming skills to over 10,000 children, which is an incredible local feat.

Last year, classes were suspended due to the pandemic and this year the Club has made the inevitable decision to close. Club President Bob Howe OAM, who taught swimming at the Bush School for over 46 years, says he is sad the Swim Club is closing. "It's a real pity. The Club was formed to meet a need in the community and it's no longer required. We are exceedingly proud of the contribution we have made. I wish to extend my thanks and praise to all our volunteers who have participated over the years. We know we have saved lives and there's nothing more important than that," says Bob.

As the Swim Club consisted solely of volunteers, it was able to charge about a quarter of the normal cost for swimming lessons, making lessons as accessible as possible for kids in the



The Bush School Learn to Swim Club acknowledges current long-term volunteers:

John Collins	Lauren McGrath	Frances Simpson-Lee
Carolyn Cross	Chris Markham	Betty Teague
Annabelle Fairbairn	Sarah Marten	Richard Teague
Megan Featherstone	Cathy Moore	Natasha Wilson
Bob Germaine	Emily Moore	Katie Wright
Helen Hanlon	Chris Seddon	Liz Wright
Bob Howe	Christy Seddon	Rachel Wright

community. In several cases, volunteer swim teaching became a family affair. Chief Instructor Frances Simpson-Lee, who taught swimming for over 36 years was joined by her daughters Liz, Cathy and Margie and later her granddaughters, Emily, Katie and Rachel, who all became long-term instructors.

All of its volunteers should be proud of their involvement, praised for keeping the Swim Club running for so many decades and know that their participation has left behind a legacy of water-safe swimmers.

# Video Conference Will Appointments

Prolonged stay-at-home orders in NSW have left many in the community contemplating their financial and legal affairs. NSW Trustee & Guardian, the state's largest Will-maker, has recognised this demand and is offering video conference appointments for people to make a Will.

"Video conference appointments mean people can stay home, reduce physical contact and still complete this critical document," said Acting Chief Executive Officer Megan Osborne. The NSW Government passed a regulation last year under the Electronic Transactions Act 2020 to allow certain legal documents to be witnessed using video conference technology. It is estimated that just under 50 per cent of adults in NSW do not have a current Will in place. "Making a Will is the best way people can protect themselves, their loved ones and futureproof their valuables and assets," said Ms Osborne. "This is our commitment to making our services as accessible as possible for NSW residents." The Will-making service is free for people on the full Centrelink Age Pension.

<https://www.tag.nsw.gov.au/wills/make-will>



## Mayor's Message

For Ku-ring-gai residents, the requirement to wear masks outdoors is in place (at the time of print). Unless you are running or undertaking some other form of strenuous exercise, you should wear a mask. This covers activities such as taking your children to the playground or walking to and from the shops.

It is a sad fact that if we are to return to anything resembling normal life, we must stay the course and follow these restrictions. Council's Life Online page offers mental health support for those who need it. Please stay safe by staying home as much as possible and if you are able, book in for your vaccination.

Ku-ring-gai Council Mayor Jennifer Anderson

<https://www.krg.nsw.gov.au/Community/Life-Online>

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## Ku-ring-gai Council

### 2021 Local Government Election Information

The NSW Government has announced the postponement of local government elections until Saturday 4 December 2021. Ku-ring-gai residents and ratepayers will elect 10 Councillors comprising two Councillors to represent each of the five wards:

- Comenarra • Gordon • Roseville • St Ives • Wahroonga

Voting in Council elections is compulsory for all electors included on the residential roll. To check or update your residential roll details, go to the Australian Electoral Commission website at [www.aec.gov.au](http://www.aec.gov.au)

Applications for postal voting close at **5pm Monday 29 November 2021**  
Pre-poll voting opens on **22 November** and closes on **3 December 2021**.

For more information about Ku-ring-gai Council elections visit [krg.nsw.gov.au/elections](http://krg.nsw.gov.au/elections)

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1300 10 20 30 [www.tag.nsw.gov.au](http://www.tag.nsw.gov.au)

\*Includes Power of Attorney and Enduring Guardianship documents. See website for details.





# Susie Youssef

## Bringing Joy When We Need It Most

Isabella Ross

A comedian, actor, writer, presenter and improviser – Susie Youssef has made a great name for herself. *Sydney Observer* was delighted to speak with Susie in regard to her new hosting role, her experience dealing with lockdown blues and her favourite things. She's open, relatable and funny – qualities that always make for a special profile.



**M**aking *It Australia* is coming to screens in September, and Susie is excited to see what audiences make of the show. “Any opportunity you get to wield a hot glue gun is a good day in my life!” she laughs. *Making It Australia* is a series that celebrates enthusiastic, professional and amateur craftspeople, with an incredibly positive, uplifting and family-friendly format. “It’s all about celebrating people who are creative, with a bunch of different makers from across the country.” Many of us would agree that now is an important time for a bit of joy and creativity amid the current lockdowns and heavy world news. “A big part of the show is all about everyone having fun and I really love the combination between craft and comedy. I think we could do with a bit of that right now.”

Given her role on the show, I was intrigued to know if Susie considers herself a bit of a maker – the answer was hilariously relatable. “Every time someone asks me that I think maybe I was the absolute wrong person for this job! I’m not very crafty – I

adore doing it but it’s not my strength. I grew up with creative parents. My dad was always improving the cubby house or making billy karts, and my mum was a very decorative cook. But I don’t think either of those skills were passed down... I was definitely the biggest cheerleader for the contestants on the show, but I couldn’t level with them!”

Susie’s warm and witty energy has undoubtedly made her an audience favourite as well on *The Project*. “I pinch myself that I get to work on that show. I love the people I work with and we get the opportunity to talk with incredible humans.” Having covered incredible stories, there’s one that continues to stand out to Susie. “I’ll never forget the opportunity to go to Uluru just before the climb was banned. Just to speak to the incredible people who protect the rock – it blew me away and I was completely in awe of it.”

I’m always interested when interviewing people who work within the news cycle, what it’s like to deliver the news stories of the day. “Anyone who watches the show knows there are times where we’re so taken by the stories we’re reporting on that we do cry at the desk. It’s a rollercoaster of emotions. But I think there’s real care and consideration for the people we talk to.” It’s a show that continues to find that balance among the light and the shade of current affairs. “The balance is tough – hairpin turns are so tricky, going from a difficult story to one that is more uplifting or a comedic bit. You’re learning from the best – the people on that show are at the top of their game. I was lucky to start out my comedy career in improv, as it’s all about reacting quickly and being present.”

Whether it’s writing, performing or producing comedy for stage, radio or television, it’s safe to say that Susie is an incredibly talented comedian. Yet it would be naïve to assume that with comedy and improv experience, one develops a thicker skin. “The whole philosophy of improv is that you should dare to fail often and then bounce back from it. I probably don’t have a thick skin. I still can get upset when I read bad comments on social media, but I think it’s the relentlessness of it, with commentary coming your way all the time.”

Like many of us, Susie herself was open to sharing her experience with pandemic fatigue and the challenges with keeping positive. “It’s a tricky one. Everyone I’ve spoken to thought this year would be

different. 2020 was thought to be the worst year, but 2021 has been a strong contender! There have been days where I’ve struggled to get out of bed, but most of the time I’ve been putting my energy into long walks as it’s great for my mental health,” she shares. “I now have a whole bunch of crafty stuff at home that I’ve been getting into during lockdown. Mostly origami, but also kayaking has been a highlight. But I don’t want to minimise it, it’s been an awful time amid the world. It’s tough to laugh right now and that’s ok. But given the opportunity to be in front of an audience again, I will take it in a heartbeat.”

Keep up to date with Susie via her Instagram [@susie\\_youssef](#). *Making It Australia* starts 15<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30pm on 10.

### Susie’s Favourite Things:

**Favourite career moment?** Working on *Whose Line Is It Anyway? Australia* was one of those career-defining moments. I then did the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and Colin Mochrie who was part of the original British series came and saw my comedy show. I felt so sorry for the rest of the people in the audience – I just performed for him for the entire hour!

**Hardest career moment?** I had to do improv at an 18-year-old’s birthday party with two of my friends. The birthday girl did not know we were coming, it was a surprise from her parents. It was a nightmare.

**Favourite spot in Sydney?** The Rocks or Inner West.

**What’s the funniest thing you have read about yourself in the media?** I try my best not to read comments. My sisters every now and then let me know if something saucy comes up!

**A subject or cause you are passionate about?** I’ve always been very passionate about asylum seekers and a lot of my creative projects have revolved around that. Very early on in my career I did a play called *The Boat People* and I recently did a play *The Appleton Ladies’ Potato Race* where I played a refugee in a small town. Amid the horrendous situation going on in Afghanistan, it’s so important to remember we are all human beings and we all have human rights. At the end of the day, we are so lucky to be in a position where we can help people and we really need to do that.



## Studying for HSC: COVID-19 edition

Madeleine Taplin

Whilst the current COVID-19 outbreak has had massive impacts, it's safe to say our current Year 12 students have been particularly affected. From cancelled/rescheduled/remote HSC Trials to the fact HSC exams have been extended to November, the past months have been incredibly challenging. So, how can our students prepare for what's to come?

It all starts with creating a balance between work and downtime, especially given the home has become the new school environment. Try going for a half hour walk once the school day is finished, followed by a yummy snack break with the household away from your desk. This separation time will be crucial in ensuring that students avoid the real potential of burnout. A short Zoom session on the weekend with fellow peers is also a great way to keep connected.

If you are finding yourself struggling, the Department of Education is here to help. They have ensured that all schools

will provide their students with "key curriculum needs, check-ins and wellbeing support," so students should use this to their advantage. "We want students, their families and their teachers to be assured that despite disruptions, the hard work of students will be recognised," notes Chief Executive Officer of NESA Paul Martin. "Students will have the opportunity to receive an HSC and move on to the next chapter of their lives."

Studying for these major exams is also challenging whilst lockdowns and uncertainty remain rife. Time management is key – create schedules that you can stick to. Family members should aim to provide a quiet space for students to work, ensuring the rest of the household is aware of the student's study schedule too. The most important thing to remember is to be realistic and resilient, adjusting the expectations you may have when it comes to final assessments and exams. We understand Year 12 is stressful enough without all these changes, so put your brave face on and do the best you can. Everyone in the community is rooting for the class of 2021!

## Learning through Podcasts

Sara Zarriello

We've all been told to listen instead of talking once or twice (or three) times before. Learning doesn't have to end in the classroom – podcasts are a great tool for the little ones as well as the older ones to learn a bit about the world around them. Below are our recommendations for the best podcasts tailored to each age group interested in learning something new.

### **BUT WHY: A PODCAST FOR CURIOUS KIDS**

A show where kids ask the big questions and answer the big questions. This is for the kids who are continuously curious about everything. With episodes on 'why are fireworks bright?' and 'what's the cleverest thing a hippo can do?', there is always something else to know!

Episode length 20-30 minutes  
Available on Apple Podcasts/Spotify/Google Podcasts

### **STUFF YOU SHOULD KNOW**

Have you ever wanted to know about truffles, planet Mars, Rosa Parks, MRIs or superstitions? This show has you covered! The hosts pick a new subject each episode to deep dive into, providing a broad range of content that explains stuff you may have missed.

Episode length 40-60 minutes  
Available on Apple Podcasts/Spotify/Google Podcasts/iHeart Radio Podcasts

### **THE PAST AND THE CURIOUS: A HISTORY PODCAST FOR KIDS AND FAMILIES**

A show about history spanning from George Washington to Romani musicians and the creation of the telescope. This is for everyone – parents, kids and everyone in between. The host makes informative episodes that engage and inspire.

Episode length 30-35 minutes  
Available on Apple Podcasts/Spotify/Google Podcasts



## Education: Hope in Relationships

Russell Bailey, Headmaster at Redeemer Baptist School

As I talk with students and ask them 'what do you miss most during lockdown?', the most common answer is 'being with friends and teachers at school.' They want to be able to talk face-to-face. They want to be able to play basketball and soccer. They want the security of kindness and direction in the presence of their teachers.

There is a great line in C. S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia* where the characters lament – "it is winter in Narnia and has been for ever so long ... always winter, but

never Christmas." It's a bit like that with us and the extended delays in lockout from school. Normally we can't wait to get to the holidays but right now we're all longing to be back at school! So, what is so good about being at school?

Of course, it's great to receive and impart the academic preparation needed for tertiary studies and a life of vocational contribution to our families and communities. Much of this can be (and is being) done online. But the absence of being together has heightened our awareness that what happens at school is not just the development of knowledge, skills and understanding. At school we can explore

our humanity in vibrant contact with our peers and teachers. As teachers and parents, we must use what's in the bank of our relationship with our students so that they continue – as much as possible – to progress in their schooling in personal contact with mentors who can convey not only information but also hope. Hope that what is being done now will be of value for their future. Hope that the winter of lockdown will give way to the spring of freedom.

We want our students to know that there is a good purpose in every day – whatever the circumstances. Let's all find ways to give hope to every child in our online care at school.



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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





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## Local Home Learning

Isabella Ross

There's no denying that learning from home has been a bit of a challenge for our fantastic North Shore students, but it's also great to see their resilience and determination.

Loreto Normanhurst has been sharing images on their socials of students in their home learning environment – from Wahroonga to Warren and beyond, their learning community remains connected despite being apart.

Arden Anglican School has been hosting a Backyard Book Club as well as Friday night online science experiments – fun!

Pymble Ladies' College has been hosting their own 'Pymlympics' to engage their students. The challenges set by teachers have been a fun way for the girls to keep motivated while earning House points, all activities based on a Mind-Body-Spirit framework.

Masada College students in Year 2 have been learning about one another's morning routines in Hebrew – having breakfast together on Zoom and furthering their language skills.

St Lucy's Wahroonga, a special primary and high school for children with disabilities, continues to teach some of its students on campus given their various needs. Engaging learning activities continue to take place including gardening, a mini-Athletics Carnival, music, food-tech and more.



*Dillwynia retorta*

## Eggs & Bacon – Pea Flowers

Brian Roach

If ever there was a common name for a native plant that simply rolls a multitude of species into the one name, it must be 'Eggs & Bacon.' I'm sure it had its origin in seeking to describe a plant with pea-like flowers that were yellow and orange. There are many of them and most are in the family Fabaceae and they're not all yellow and orange. Just about all members of this very large group are legumes and so yes, they are pea flowers!

One of my favourite native plants is the West Australian Flame Pea, *Chorizema cordatum*. Although it hails from the other side of our vast continent, it does very well on the east coast and its particularly appealing attribute is that it does very well in the shade and can provide brilliant orange, pink and yellow 'pea' flowers from late winter and well into spring. It generally only gets to a height of around 1 to 1.5 metres and responds very well to heavy pruning after flowering.

There are many 'Eggs & Bacon' plants in our local bush and most of them are just yellow. A lovely one is *Pultenaea stipularis*. It has almost pine-like foliage and can grow to around 2m with very bright,

yellow terminal flowers in early spring. Swamp wallabies also seem to be particularly fond of this one as well. I strongly suspect that the plant that first garnered the common name of 'Eggs & Bacon' was *Dillwynia retorta*. It's prolific in our local bush with bright yellow pea flowers with a splash of orange in the centre. It has stiff, fine foliage and can grow to around 2m. Like most of our local pea flowers, they are under-story plants, happy in semi-shade although they are equally happy in full sun but pretty much all of them demand good drainage to be successfully grown in the garden.

As I've written before however, so often the more difficult native plants to flourish in our gardens are our local bushland species. In the bush they grow in superb drainage on sandy soils over sandstone rock. Replicating that in the garden is therefore not easy. So, I end up going back to another wonderful pea-flowering bush from the west, *Eutaxia obovata*. It has various forms, but all have yellow and orange flowers. Although its flowering period is fairly short in late winter to early spring, it's really stunning in flower! The form I have grows to around 30cm high with a spread of a metre or so and is happy in full sun to semi-shade. I first saw this form at Kings Park in Perth and couldn't wait to get my hands on one or more.



*Chorizema cordatum*



*Pultenaea stipularis*



*Chorizema cordatum* close-up



*Eutaxia obovata*

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.

# Designing the Ultimate Outdoor Entertaining Space

Madeleine Taplin

As the weather gets decidedly warmer, it's time to start thinking about all the summer gatherings on the horizon! Whilst gatherings aren't currently allowed, the lockdown provides the perfect time to spruce up your outdoor entertaining space in preparation for summer. These spaces will prove to be the ideal place to host family and friends for a range of pool and barbeque nights, dinner parties and could even be used for Christmas Day!



Garden Trading

## Seating Areas

When updating your outdoor area, it's important to consider functionality, specifically when you have larger groups of guests. The easiest way to tackle this problem is through creating a number of different sitting areas, combined with sections of open space. To avoid crowding, look into having a dining table with chairs and some outdoor couches. Keep things fun by adding a few corner seats and maybe even a hanging egg chair in the corner.

## Technology

It isn't a party without a few pieces of technology. Consider installing some speakers to provide music all night long (look to Len Wallis Audio), or a small bar fridge to hold all your drinks. Additionally, since the Australian summer can get pretty hot, you could also look at getting an outdoor fan or a portable air conditioner to keep you and your guests cool. And don't forget the most important part – the barbeque!

## Mood Lighting

Lighting is one of the most affordable and effective ways of transforming your entertaining space. Lighting can help to define space, create ambiance and atmosphere – so it's a great aspect to begin with. If you are looking to create a space that feels sophisticated yet slightly moody, look for a range of candle lanterns, exterior downlights or perhaps some solar pathway lights. If you're looking for something a little more fun and unique, try out some outdoor fairy lights!



Lights4fun

## Plants

Trees and flower bushes, or patio plants in pots, decorative planters or climbers, provide a significant enhancement to any outdoor entertaining space. A bit of greenery helps make the space smell and feel fresh and can even make smaller spaces appear larger. Try ferns, ponytail palms and bromeliads. Additionally, you can put up some hanging planter baskets.



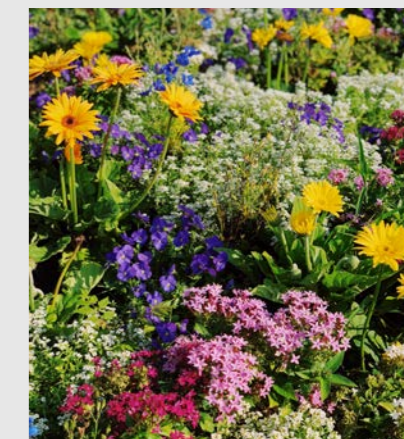
Satara Australia

# 2021 Sydney Spring Garden Comp

There are some pretty spectacular gardens around the local area, perfectly manicured with time, consideration and passion at the heart. For those who pride themselves on their immaculate residential gardens, it's worth considering entering the 2021 Sydney Spring Garden Competition!

Free to enter, entries are open for the competition until 13<sup>th</sup> October, meaning you still have plenty of time to get your front yard into tip top shape. Sydney Spring Garden Competition judge, Cecily Rogers OAM notes how the gardens are

assessed, highlighting the core purpose is for gardens to beautify streets – the simple pleasure of sharing a garden with the general public. "As a judge, we are looking at everything from the plant selection, colour arrangement, quality of the plants, to the sustainability and practicality of the garden. Each garden is judged from street view, exactly as the general public would enjoy it." Run by the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW, the same people behind the iconic Royal Easter Show, the competition continues the tradition of fostering excellence in horticulture.



## How to Get Your Garden, Competition-Ready

Honorary Vice-President of the Royal Horticultural Society of NSW, Cecily Rogers OAM shares her top tips when it comes to curating a perfect garden ready to be judged:

1. Imaginative and unique qualities are key in terms of the garden's design.
2. Look for harmony and unity for placement/layout.
3. Consider the vista or skyline.
4. Consider soft elements – this includes trees, lawns, shrubs and vines.
5. Be sure to opt for soft elements that are visually suitable as well.
6. The health of plants and their groupings are important.
7. Consider hard elements – paving, retaining walls and ornamental structures.
8. Say no to weeds and pests.
9. Embrace mulch and irrigation.
10. Remember overall maintenance.



## Happy Wattle Day

There's nothing that says spring quite like the yellow bloom of wattles across Sydney, especially the North Shore. 1<sup>st</sup> September is Wattle Day, and what better way to celebrate our native Australian flora than with a picture – this beauty captured at Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden. Specific recommendations of wattle varieties according to contributor and Australian Plants Society member Brian Roach, include the Crowded-Leaf Wattle or the very similar Golden-Top Wattle (both are smaller-growing wattles great for Sydney gardens).



# What's Hot in Homewares

Isabella Ross



## Heavenly Scented and Quirky Candles

A fantastic small business, Lit Life is a home-based venture. Not only are each of the candles hand poured in small batches to ensure quality control, they're also made of non-toxic soy products with sustainability and the environment centre of mind. Available in a range of scents, the candles come in cute vessels – including vintage teacups, travel tins, classic glass jars and more. <https://www.litlife.com.au/allproducts> | Instagram @litlife\_candles.

## Stand-out Canvas Prints

If you are looking for a staple piece of art for the home, look no further than Miimi & Jiinda. It's an Australian art business founded by Aboriginal mother and daughter, Lauren and Melissa. Described beautifully by the duo, their artwork "is contemporary and modern, and portrays our daily journey as artists. The colours and patterns are inspired by our ancestral homelands." <https://miimianandjiinda.com/> | Instagram @miimianandjiinda.



## Carefully Curated Ornaments

Founded by local woman Jo Hutchens, Well Versed Homes provides a range of beautifully designed and carefully curated homewares and gifts. Ceramic dishes, coasters, tea towels, tablemats, cushions, vases, Christmas trinkets, Christian-oriented ornaments, table runners, delightful baby shower gifts, and presents for him and her – there's something to suit all. <https://wellversedhomes.com/> | Instagram @well\_versed\_homes



# Online Gardening What's On

## Grow Fresh Food Fast

**Date:** 11<sup>th</sup> September  
**Time:** 10am – 11am  
**Where:** Streaming online  
**Cost:** Free  
This introductory webinar will get you growing five fresh greens in a handful of soil, such as pea shoots and microgreens!

<https://whatson.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/events/grow-fresh-food-fast-web>

## Worm Farming Basics

**Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> September  
**Time:** 10am – 11:30am  
**Where:** Streaming online  
**Cost:** Free

Worm farming is a great way to deal with kitchen waste. Learn how to start your own worm farm, what to feed your worms and how to use worm products in your pots or garden beds.

<https://whatson.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/events/worm-farm-basics-online-presentation>

## The Wonders of Pollination

**Date:** 30<sup>th</sup> September  
**Time:** 6pm – 7pm  
**Where:** Streaming online  
**Cost:** Free

If you are eager to know more about pollination, join Dr Francisco Garcia for a super engaging presentation about some of the most fascinating facts about pollination around the world.

<https://www.krg.nsw.gov.au/Things-to-do/Whats-on/Pollination-the-weird-the-bad-and-the-ugly>

# Dinnerware Sorted!

Isabella Ross



## Simply Classic

For those who think simple is best, there is nothing quite like a beautifully classic dinnerware set. One thing to consider is a pastel or soft-toned block colour set – something that still remains timeless but is on trend too! Recommendation: Royal Doulton Olio Celadon Blue Set <https://www.royaldoulton.com.au/olio-celadon-blue-side-plate-22cm-by-barber-osgerby.html>



## Ceramics

Ceramic plates and bowls are incredibly popular in the homewares industry, with both high-end and affordable retailers offering ceramic dinnerware sets. With textural and visual interest, ceramic dinnerware has become a staple in Sydney restaurants and undoubtedly in our homes now too! Recommendation: Matt Blatt Seaside Handmade Blue Ceramic Dinnerware <https://www.royaldoulton.com.au/olio-celadon-blue-side-plate-22cm-by-barber-osgerby.html>



## Funky Prints

Adding colour to your table can be a lot of fun – funky prints, geometrics, patterns, bold colours – the options are exciting! Modern and memorable dinnerware is great for making a statement and adding a bit of personality to your home. Recommendation: In The Roundhouse Ciao Bella <https://www.intheroundhouse/collections/plates>

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# 5 Valuable Antiques to Look For

Isabella Ross

Seniors could potentially be sitting on a goldmine without realising! With a treasure-trove of antiques and vintage pieces to discover, here is a guide to 5 particularly valuable finds to look for within your collection.

## 1 Vintage Fashion

For those who may have vintage clothing pieces hidden in the back of the wardrobe – you could be in luck! Examples could include vintage designer sets, cloche hats, glomesh bags, corsets, flowy dresses, pinafores and more. Incredibly, there is an insatiable appetite for vintage fashion currently, particularly via the online marketplace. Do a bit of research, see what an average price could be for certain items and then consider selling any of your vintage finds accordingly.



## 2 Records

Vinyl collections were all the rage during the lives of many baby boomers, and it is safe to say they are making an undeniable comeback. The resurgence has been seen in op shops, record stores, garage sales and weekend markets. Yet many seniors could possibly have some vinyl gems in their home – and if they haven't been loved for a while, why not sell them? Interestingly, original *Beatles* vinyls are said to be a particular favourite among avid collectors.



## 3 Typewriter

Got a dusty old typewriter in the garage or attic? If it's in good working condition, then it may be worth selling. Mid-century and earlier European-made models are particularly valuable, as well as the condition of the machine itself a major determiner in evaluation. Pawn shops, auctions and online marketplaces are the go-to when it comes to selling.

## 3 Fine China

Before throwing away your China, pottery and dinnerware, it's important to double check the embossed stamp underneath and assess whether it could be worth something. Teacups, plates, bowls – fine bone China not only looks lovely, but the quality is undeniable. Stand outs include Shelley, Wedgwood, Royal Doulton, Royal Worcester and Staffordshire China. Having a quick search on eBay or asking your local antique store, with many across the North Shore area, could be worth your time!



## 4 Stamps

Growing up, there were many kids that had their own special stamp collection. Nowadays, single stamps are around the \$1.10 mark – a very different price compared to a couple of decades ago. With this in mind, many would be surprised to know that stamp collecting is still a popular pastime. There are particular stamps online that range from tens to thousands of dollars. So, if you still have your childhood stamp memorabilia lying around, have a peak and see if you are sitting on a rare stamp goldmine!



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

# Staying Resilient in a Pandemic

Dr Sue Ferguson

Being stuck in lockdown or under other restrictions can be difficult. We're probably all having days or at least moments when we're feel stressed, down, irritable or angry. Anxiety is pretty common too! So how do we get through it all? Resilience has many components which help us bounce back.

Resilience (via Associate Professor Monique Crane from Macquarie University) involves resources, coping strategies and attitudes.

To build or maintain your **resources**, eat healthy food, do some exercise and get enough sleep. Also keep in touch with friends and family and listen to others in a supportive way. If needed, apply for any government benefits such as the COVID-19 financial relief package if eligible.

Dr Crane's research (with older adults) found reflecting on how you thought about and coped with previous stress, the **strategies** you used that worked and ways you benefited or grew from it, is helpful. Taking practical steps to protect yourself and others is also important in reducing anxiety (such as getting vaccinated and sticking to health orders). Relaxation exercises or meditation are also helpful.

To build resilient **attitudes** try to savour any pleasant aspects of each day, and practice gratitude. It's also important however to learn to recognise when you're feeling particularly down or vulnerable and practice self-compassion. Resilient people are also willing to ask for help when needed. I know the support of my friends is really helping me get through this stressful time and keeping me optimistic about the future!

Remember, as author Helen Keller said, "although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it."

<https://www.mq.edu.au/research/research-centres-groups-and-facilities/healthy-people/centres/centre-for-ageing-cognition-and-wellbeing/resources/coping-with-coronavirus-anxiety>

If you are particularly distressed or having difficulty with day-to-day tasks, consult with your GP or access:

- Older Persons COVID-19 Support Line 1800 171 866
- Free psychological treatment via Ageing Wiseley: <https://ageingwisely.org.au/site/about>
- Lifeline, 24 hours a day on 13 11 14.

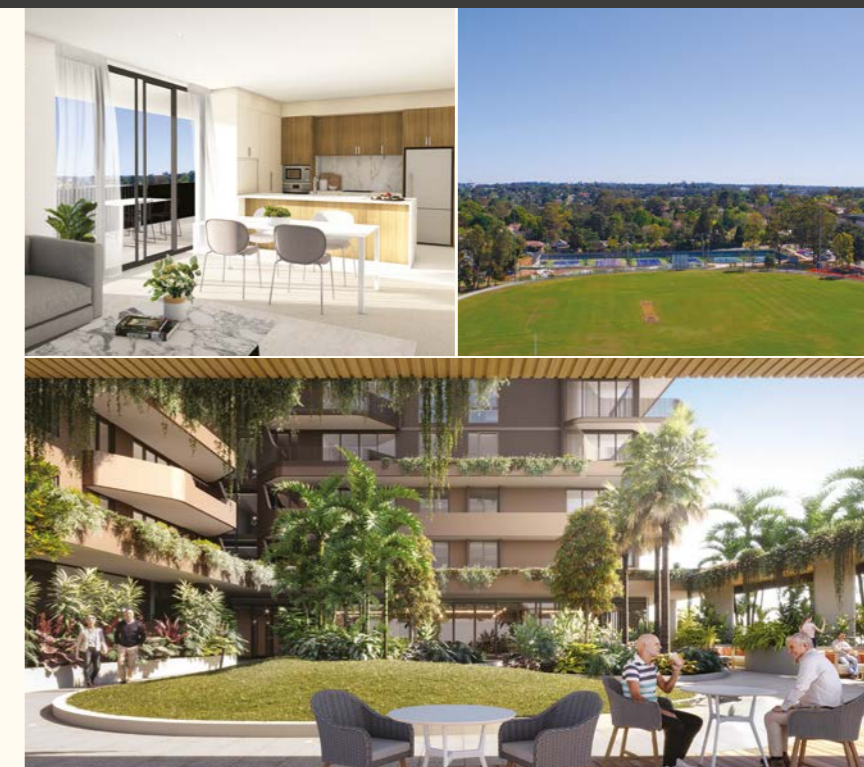
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# Unpacking The ‘Generation Divide’

Sara Zariello

It is a common misconception that some older people disagree with the young. Last month, National Seniors Australia released a report on intergenerational solidarity, exposing the true thoughts and perspectives the elderly has towards younger generations in our community.

Seniors are proving to have more positive attitudes towards younger people than negative, says Professor John McCallum the National Seniors CEO. The results from the report state that 31% of seniors in the study agreed that job security and unemployment prospects for younger people were of the most concern. A close second was housing affordability at 27%, followed by education, mental health and climate change.

During lockdown, many older people are struggling to stay in touch with their younger counterparts. A breakdown in communication due to physical barriers is damaging not only for older generations,

but younger people too. Australian Seniors reports that 8 in 10 seniors are “sorely missing being able to see their children and/or grandchildren in person,” whilst younger people have lost a large amount of support from these major players in their lives.

Not only has lockdown challenged our abilities to physically support one another, but also our ability to communicate on a deep level. Australian Seniors reports only 1 in 7 are providing care to their older family members through technology. Intergenerational connections depend on learning new skills from one another. Older people often teach younger people interpersonal skills including values such as empathy and respect, whilst younger people teach seniors new communication technologies – including the use of Facebook, FaceTime and WhatsApp to communicate with their friends and family online.

Young people often feel the sting when they are disconnected from their older family members and friends. To stay connected,

suggest a time each week to talk with your grandchild. Make an effort to call your older family members every now and then. Pick up groceries for your aunt or uncle and drop it off at their home in a COVID-safe way. To bridge the gap, we need to not only maintain, but strengthen our intergenerational relationships.

National Seniors Report  
[https://nationalseniors.com.au/news/featured-news/talking-about-the-younger-generation?utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=connect\\_290721](https://nationalseniors.com.au/news/featured-news/talking-about-the-younger-generation?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=connect_290721)

Australian Seniors Report  
<https://www.seniors.com.au/news-insights/australian-seniors-series-connectivity-during-covid-19>

Seniors Connected Program  
<https://www.dss.gov.au/communities-and-vulnerable-people-programs-services/seniors-connected-program>

# When Dental Visits were Dreaded

Margaret Simpson

There are few things baby boomer children dreaded more than a visit to the dentist. You never usually went unless you had a toothache, needed a filling or a tooth removed. I can vividly recall with mounting apprehension hearing the loud drill in the waiting room, then when it was your turn, sitting in that big chair waiting for it to start up again on you!

You would try to concentrate on watching the pulley system of endless cords circulating along the arms in a vain attempt at distraction. The drilling was slow and painful, as numbing solutions were virtually non-existent then. Drilling time was lengthy and often it felt like it would never end!

For major dental work we were put ‘under’ with chloroform either in the surgery or hospital when numerous teeth were extracted or filled at the same time. Some were so scarred from the experiences that for decades after just the look, sound, taste and smell of any dentist’s surgery was enough to bring on an attack of dental phobia – thank goodness today’s kids won’t have that concern.

In the 1950s, the NSW Health Department sent dentists to schools to provide a free dental service for six to nine-year-olds. After



visiting Gloucester District Rural School in 1950, the local press reported a total of 539 temporary teeth and 47 permanent teeth were extracted and 200 fillings undertaken. After the dentist had left, teeth were swept out of every corner of the room! Despite brushing our teeth twice a day with our Tek toothbrushes and using Colgate or Ipana toothpaste, we still suffered from extensive tooth decay. This was not surprising due to the amount of sugar in lollies we consumed but principally from the lack of fluoride in drinking water. This left a legacy – a mouthful of dark grey amalgam fillings with every single one of our molars filled.

Margaret Simpson is a Ku-ring-gai local who was previously a curator at Sydney’s Powerhouse Museum, as well as possessing a passion for social history.

## SPRING IS HERE!

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## Mausoleum of The Holy Way North Ryde



We invite you to contact us to find out more about the Mausoleum of The Holy Way.

Call 1300 389 888 or visit [www.nmclm.com.au](http://www.nmclm.com.au)

The Mausoleum of The Holy Way is an impressive semi-open structure built adjacent to the Stations of the Cross area, in the Catholic section at Macquarie Park Cemetery and Crematorium, North Ryde.

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Macquarie Park North Ryde



## Support Local Birdlife

**B**ird-loving seniors are welcome to get involved in supporting local wildlife, including our incredible native birds, by getting involved with 'Habitat Stepping Stone.' The initiative was developed by the Australian Research Institute for Environment and Sustainability and founded by Macquarie University. It's also great to see on their online map that the Upper North Shore region has a very large number of participants in the scheme.

To get involved, choose from dozens of beautiful native plants and other habitat options that help your local wildlife – add some around your home, and the non-for-profit initiative will send a Habitat Stepping Stone plaque for you to showcase. You can also have a digital colourful bird logo appear at your place on their online map and share photos of your lovely neighbourhood birds to their Facebook page. <http://www.habitatsteppingstones.org.au/>

Seniors are also encouraged to join a bird watching group, with a few available across the North Shore, activities dependent on COVID-19 restrictions.

## Get a Spring in your Step

Rejimon Punchayil

**T**hat's what Geoff got literally and figuratively this spring. Although he realised the need for a walking aid to improve his mobility, he put off the decision as he could not find a suitable one. That is when he met a carbon fibre walker with a seat, back rest and bag, weighing no more than five kilos – functionality and aesthetics combined in one. If you have not found that spring in your step, find one this spring!



As we welcome spring, let's examine what we can do to have a positive impact on our health and wellbeing, despite all the hardship happening around us. Spring is a great season to resume some of the good habits we left behind, like going for a walk, following the local rules. Mobility is such an important aspect in our everyday life. Mobility promotes not only our social and emotional wellbeing, but it also plays a vital role in our physical wellbeing, namely the functioning of our critical internal organs. A mobility scooter is a great option. Come and discover, as Geoff did, a range of fashionable and functional solutions for independence, dignity and mobility at <https://comfortdiscovered.com/>

## Cooking with the Stars

Sara Zariello

**L**ockdown has put a hold on many things, most of all our exciting dining experiences. Without the ability to visit our favourite dining spots we've had to make do at home. Never fear though, now our favourite chefs are plating us up an invitation to a world of gastronomic happiness on their social media platforms. Dishing out easy at-home recipes with store bought ingredients – cooking like a pro has never been so easy.

Ever wondered how to make the perfect fried egg – *MasterChef Australia's* Jock Zonfrillo has got you covered. Taking eggs to the next level, Jock whips up a delicious Cacio é Pepe, adding a heaped dash of pecorino cheese and a generous sprinkle of black pepper, the common fried egg is taken to a different dimension. If fried eggs aren't your thing, try out his Carbonara recipe. Shreds of guanciale (Italian cured meat) are tossed through a delicious pasta dripping in a mixture of egg and cheese. Mouth-watering is an understatement! Check out more easy recipes via his Instagram reels: <https://www.instagram.com/zonfrillo/reels/>

Overly complicated lunches got you down? Gordon Ramsay whips up some great sandwiches that will take your lunches from drab to fab. Take his vegan BLT, packed with spices and secretly disguising tofu strips as bacon, packed in between layers of tomato



and lettuce. Gordon also elevates the classic 'Avo on Toast' by delivering his Chorizo Avocado Toast recipe. All these recipes are easily available on his Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/gordonramsay/videos>

The queen of the Australian food scene, Maggie Beer has a weekly cooking tutorial available to watch on her Instagram every Saturday at 4pm. A previous *Sydney Observer* cover, the incredible cook has some classic recipes including a roast chook, lemon delicious pudding, pea and ham soup, and baked peaches. [https://www.instagram.com/maggie\\_beer/channel/](https://www.instagram.com/maggie_beer/channel/)

## The Organic Food Debate

Madeleine Taplin

**H**ealth food has seen a recent surge in popularity, with far more people than ever before choosing to become gluten free, vegan, vegetarian or even organic. With National Organic Week Australia around the corner (20<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> September), we thought it great to unpack what is organic produce, and how does it differ from 'regular' produce.

Organic farmers and food producers grow food without using synthetic chemicals such as pesticides and artificial fertilisers. This means in their production these foods do not contain genetically modified components that change the balance or chemical make-up of the produce. When referring to organic meats, this means the animals are not fed any growth-relating drugs, steroids or hormones, and the animals are not kept in cages or kept in feed lots. However, it's important to note that organic foods are not necessarily completely chemical free, as the produce may be grown on land previously used

for non-organic production and therefore the soils may contain chemical residues. Yet the chance is considerably lower than conventional farming, which relies on chemical fertilisers to help ensure produce is available for larger periods of the year

and consistent quality. Conventional farming is still the most frequently used method of farming. Undergoing its own rebranding, it now commonly utilises a few organic farming properties in conjunction with the use of some chemical fertilisers.

### WEIGHING UP THE COST

There are many differences between organic and conventional farming, but it's important to note that choosing to purchase one over the other is not ethically wrong. Whilst organic farming is recognised as being better for the environment, purchasing these foods often can put a strain on the wallet. Organic foods are harder to access and often come with a higher price tag. On the other hand, conventional produce is easier to access and harvest, thus lowering the price. This means it's more easily accessible for a variety of people. Additionally, organic food is often recognised as being healthier, but there's no clear evidence to support this. A healthy diet simply means eating more fruits and vegetables, whether they are organically grown or conventionally. The choice is yours!



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## More Than Meets the Eye: Optometry Q's Answered

Isabella Ross

Many of us have been left in the dark when it comes to understanding eye health.

*Sydney Observer* spoke with Sophie Koh, the National Professional Services Advisor for Optometry Australia, to answer common optometry questions.

### Can you become dependent on reading glasses?

In short, no. When a person wears glasses, they see more clearly. Naturally this will make them want to use them more. The idea of an increased dependency on reading glasses is what often makes those with presbyopia (a progressive condition associated with ageing, resulting in an inability to focus on near objects) delay in getting them. There's no conclusive evidence to suggest wearing glasses changes our actual eyesight. Glasses only improve our ability to see while wearing them and have no impact on the quality of our actual vision. Instead, the truth is we've just grown accustomed to how much easier our lives can be with glasses.

### Are blue light glasses worth the hype?

The theory behind blue light is that it can contribute to symptoms of visual fatigue, since blue light scatters in the eye. With the pandemic leading many to work remotely, it's easy to understand why there's hype around something that could potentially alleviate the eye strain caused by digital screen use. Yet, there are currently limited

studies and weak evidence to suggest blue light blocking glasses can make your eyes more comfortable when using screen-based devices. If experiencing digital eye strain, Optometry Australia recommends booking a comprehensive eye examination with your optometrist.

### What are some common eye diseases to be aware of?

Cataract, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, age-related macular degeneration and dry eye disease. Cataract is the leading cause of blindness globally and because it progresses slowly, it's often hard to notice symptoms. Glaucoma is the leading cause of irreversible blindness worldwide and due to it having minimal detectable symptoms, many aren't aware they have this eye disease until it's too late. Glaucoma detected early and treated can reduce damage and loss of vision. Diabetic retinopathy is the leading cause of vision loss among working age Australians and all people with diabetes are at risk of severe vision loss and blindness. Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the leading cause of legal blindness and severe vision loss in Australia. AMD is the name given to a group of chronic, degenerative retinal eye diseases that cause progressive loss of central vision. Dry eye is very common – experiencing tired, itchy, sore or gritty eyes can be due to dryness. Regular eye examinations are essential for early detection of these common diseases, combating potential issues and helping maintain healthy eyes.

### What's your advice on contact lenses?

Wearing contact lenses offers a huge amount of visual freedom, as long as they're worn and cared for properly.

- Do wash your hands!
- Do keep eye drops handy.
- Do clean and dry your contact lens case thoroughly after each use.
- Do consider taking a break from your contacts if you experience any irritation.
- Don't wear contacts past its recommended time.
- Don't sleep in your contact lenses, unless advised by an optometrist.
- Don't skip your annual contact lens examination with your optometrist.

### How often should we be visiting our optometrist? Does the pandemic impact this?

We recommend people book in for a comprehensive eye examination with an optometrist every 2-3 years. Regular check-ups ensure that most eye conditions can be detected or corrected. Amidst the pandemic, Australians should remember not to neglect their eye health, endure poor vision or dismiss symptoms during this time. Tele-health, videoconferencing and face-to-face consultation options are being offered. Optometry Australia has also provided enhanced infection control guidelines to ensure patient safety in optometry practices.

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## New Transformative Reads for all

Sara Zariello

Craving a transformative read? Check out these budding tales set to be released just in time for spring.

### BEAUTIFUL WORLD, WHERE ARE YOU

Sally Rooney

The new novel from the author of *Normal People* comes a tale of people growing older in a world full of chaos. Confused about who they are and what they want to be, Rooney challenges her characters to love the chaos that envelops them. A great read for young adults and above, who enjoy the trials and tribulations of misfits.

### THE UNUSUAL ABDUCTION OF AVERY CONIFER

Ilsa Evans

Shirley believes her son, Daniel, is harming his daughter, Avery. An unwilling Shirley enlists the help of Avery's other grandmother, Beth to abduct her. The trio travel across country Victoria to outrun Daniel, the police and the media pack to



keep Avery safe. The catch – Shirley and Beth absolutely loathe each other. This should make for an interesting trip!

### THE ACCIDENTAL TEACHER

Tim Heath

In 1962 Tim Heath attended a teachers' college and became fascinated by the world of teaching. Dedicating the next 47 years to his cause, he taught mostly primary school children throughout New Zealand and Samoa. Heath continues to this day to be a devoted educator intrigued by children's experiences

of school life and learning to read.

### CLOUD CUCKOO LAND

Anthony Doerr

The Pulitzer Prize-winning author brings a story of hope through this galactic narrative. The stories of youth in Constantinople, a 500-year time jump into the future Idaho, and an interstellar ship named Argos are interconnected across time and space. Doerr concocts a fantastical world for all ages.

### APPLES NEVER FALL

Liane Moriarty

Aussie author of eight international bestselling novels, Moriarty delivers another stunning tale of mystery and intrigue. The Delaney household is rocked by the sudden disappearance of their mother. The four children re-examine their parents' marriage with uneasiness as all accounts point towards their father as a suspect. Moriarty develops a rich narrative focused on the female experience of family and motherhood.

## Wellness Corner

Madeleine Taplin



### Hyaluronic Acid & Vitamin B5 Skincare

Life isn't always gentle on our skin, and the recent harsh winds and chills don't help! Skin can start to look tired, dry and dehydrated, thus needing a solution. La Roche-Posay is a ground-breaking, dermatologically tested brand that has developed a range of skincare and makeup products working to hydrate and replenish skin. The new Hyalu B5 collection utilises a combination of Hyaluronic Acid and Vitamin B5 to attack

wrinkles and dryness whilst soothing and repairing skin. The serum hydrates by building up its water levels, resulting in a smooth and soft complexion, and is suitable for all skin types.

### Gua Shas

Gua Sha is a natural therapy that involves using a crystal massage tool to improve circulation in the skin. This ancient Chinese healing practice works to soften points of tension, stimulate microcirculation of the soft tissue, and increase blood flow. Gua Sha has grown in popularity within the Western world over the past 5 years, especially regarding improving the appearance of skin elasticity. To read more about this technique, and how to use a Gua Sha, check out our profile via <https://www.sydneyobserver.com/>



### Local Helipad Reaching Great Heights

A new helipad has been installed at Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital and has recently begun the first stages of testing before being fully operational. The helipad instalment marks the first time the hospital has access to a qualified space for the landing of helicopters to perform medical transfers and retrievals. Prior to the installation, helicopters landed in nearby James Park in Hornsby where they would be met by Ambulance NSW vehicles.



## Dental Care for those we love during lockdown

Dr Ian Sweeney

Many things have changed currently, but one thing that does not change is the need to look after your teeth and the teeth of the people you care for. With lockdowns for the foreseeable future, it's important to spend a little more time looking after your own teeth as well as the teeth of our loved ones.

A recent survey showed nearly 1 in 10 Australians have skipped their daily brushing routine during lockdown. Apparently nearly the same number of people were prompted to brush only after they smelt their own breath whilst wearing a mask. Dental care for the aged or patients with special needs is as imperative as it is for the rest of the population. Often ageing patients or patients with special needs have their dental care neglected because of the numerous complex issues that arise in providing dental care to patients with various physical, intellectual or behavioural disabilities.

As a minimum, everyone needs twice daily brushing and flossing. This simple process can sometimes be impossible for a parent or carer to carry out adequately in an uncooperative child or adult. If dental care is neglected, the end result is likely to be dental

At Northside Dental & Implant Centre we are committed to providing compassionate and empathetic care to all patients in our purpose-built facility. We have wheelchair access and a

decay and or gum disease. Pain from dental disease and infection may exacerbate or cause challenging behaviours, particularly when a person is unable to communicate adequately. It's therefore imperative that ageing patients or patients with special needs receive regular dental treatments at a facility that specifically caters for their complex and challenging requirements.

Today there are numerous techniques available to ensure that all patients can access dental care appropriate to their needs. This may include various forms of behavioural management and the use of conscious sedation. Conscious sedation is an easy and effective way to provide treatment from routine examination and cleaning to more complex treatment procedures. For those patients with more complex physical or medical conditions, we can provide treatment under general anaesthesia in a hospital setting.

At Northside Dental & Implant Centre we are committed to providing compassionate and empathetic care to all patients in our purpose-built facility. We have wheelchair access and a hoist on site. Our staff are highly trained and experienced in treating patients with special needs and complex medical conditions. We welcome the opportunity to assist all patients with their dental needs.

hoist on site. Our staff are highly trained and experienced in treating senior patients, patients with special needs and patients with complex medical conditions.



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

## Women's Health Week

Sara Zariello

Women play a vital role in society – we can be breadwinners, home providers, champions of empathy and more. Whilst juggling all these facets of life, sometimes we forget that the most important part of being a woman is our health. It's the age-old question – what are we without our health? If you're like me, using coffee and croissants as a band aid can only get you so far!

Regular reproductive health checks are paramount to life longevity and overall health. Breast health, mental and emotional health, ovaries, cervix and uterus health, cardiovascular health, bowel testing, eyes and dental, fertility, skin checks – these are just some to consider. Although there is a vaccination for the Human Papilloma Virus, cervical cancer screenings are necessary to identify and combat the disease. Australia is on track to drastically reduce the incidences of cervical cancer in the future thanks to

our current National Cervical Cancer Screening Program and the Centre of Research Excellence in Cervical Cancer Control. Breast cancer is the most common cancer affecting Australian women, and yet women aged in their early 20s to 40s are not as likely to get their breasts checked compared to women aged 50 and above. To learn how to check your breasts at home and be on the lookout for any changes, visit: <https://www.jeanhailes.org.au/health-a-z/breast-health>

Even amid the pandemic, it is important for regular health checks to continue. A recent survey from Continuity of Care Collaboration (via Allied Health Professionals Australia) found that 52% of Australians have delayed or avoided healthcare appointments and tests during COVID-19. So, in celebration of Women's Health Week (6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> September), let's get checked. Don't let lockdown interrupt your wellbeing – reach out to your GP or gynaecologist to book a COVID-safe appointment. Speak to your friends and family as well about getting checked.



Your health is always in your hands – and there's no harm in a warm croissant and coffee too. <https://www.womenshealthweek.com.au/>

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# Queen of Comedy Urzila Carlson

Madeleine Taplin

**W**ith Sydney's lockdown set to continue, it's undeniable that we are in desperate need of some laughs. Luckily for us, we need look no further than the upcoming season of *The Masked Singer Australia*, and in particular the ever-hilarious Urzila Carlson. Born in Johannesburg, Urzila Carlson is no stranger to the comedy scene. After immigrating to New Zealand, Carlson has become one of the biggest names in comedy in both Australia and New Zealand. Additionally, Carlson has been recognised as a comedic powerhouse, where she has toured the globe with her comedy programs selling out year after year. In 2020, Carlson joined the panel of the second season of *The Masked Singer Australia* and is returning to the show for its third season which is airing soon. We were fortunate to sit down with Urzila and find out all the secrets to her success, what we can expect from this season of *The Masked Singer Australia*, and what drew her to the world of comedy.

**What can you share with us about this season of *The Masked Singer Australia*?**  
This season is insane! It's so big and amazing, and some of the masks are interesting, some are scary, and some are truly just out of this world! But what lies beneath, well that's what will blow the minds right off the Australian public. Some of the biggest stars and some of my absolute all-time favourites.

Let's just say that on a few of the reveal nights I was screaming like a teenager at a *One Direction* concert, or like a young lady when *The Beatles* came to town! If the cameras were positioned right on the night, an Ear Nose and Throat specialist would be able to give a diagnosis on my tonsils!

**What is it that you love about being a part of the series?**

The singing, the masks, the catering, and the other panellists, as well as our amazing team of make-up artists, especially mine Margie Skeggs!

**Your 'Lockumentaries' on Instagram have been entertaining to watch! What are some of the best ways you have found to keep yourself distracted or engaged amid lockdown?**

In all honesty, I really like my own company, so I'm not ever really looking for an 'escape', or not so far at least...

**What are some of your favourites aspects when it comes to performing in front of a live audience?**

The instant gratification. I say something funny, they laugh, and success is mine! I love the atmosphere in a theatre or in a small town, and the vibe, unlike the pandemic, gives you the idea that we are all truly in the same boat and there for the same cause. I love my audiences.

**What is your approach when it come to planning a comedy show?**

I write, write, write and then perform, perform, perform and have a good time!

**How would you describe your style of comedy in a couple of words?**

I'm a storyteller.

**Is there anything else you would like to touch on?**

I'm fully vaccinated, and don't approach me before a coffee in the morning!

Keep up to date with Urzila via her Instagram [@urzilacarlson](https://www.instagram.com/urzilacarlson). The Masked Singer Australia is coming soon to 10.



## Free Spanish Classes

Now's the perfect time to learn a new skill or expand your language knowledge in preparation for a long-overdue overseas holiday! Try one of Spanish Blackboard Academy's group Spanish classes in Sydney for free before committing to any of their Spanish courses.

**Date:** 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> October

**Time:** 6pm - 7:30pm

**Where:** Streaming online

**Cost:** Free

<https://whatson.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/events/free-spanish-classes-sydney>



## Hilma af Klint At Home

Head to the Art Gallery of NSW's website to explore the art and stories from their iconic exhibition Hilma af Klint: The Secret Paintings, as part of their At Home series.

**Date:** Throughout September

**Time:** A time of your choice

**Where:** Available to watch via their website

**Cost:** Free

<https://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/art/channel/watch/hilma-af-klint-exhibition-walkthrough/>

## TEDxSydney 2021 Online

TEDxSydney includes inspiring talks, performances and films broadcasted from the Sydney Opera House. Highlights include 2021 Australian of the Year Grace Tame, ecologist Tracey Rogers and Indigenous specialist and strategist Shelley Reys AO.

**Date:** 19<sup>th</sup> September

**Time:** To be confirmed

**Where:** Streaming online

**Cost:** Prices vary

<https://tedxsydney.com/event/tedxsydney-2021-online/>

## Macramé Class with Fibre Artist

Fibre artist Ruth Shteinman is skilled in several modes of knotting, weaving, macramé, crochet and basketry. Please join her for a one-hour workshop and learn a few rudimentary macramé knots.

**Date:** 22<sup>nd</sup> September

**Time:** 6:30pm - 7:30pm

**Where:** Streaming online

**Cost:** Free

<https://www.krg.nsw.gov.au/Things-to-do/Whats-on/Beginners-macrame-with-fibre-artist-Ruth-Shteinman>



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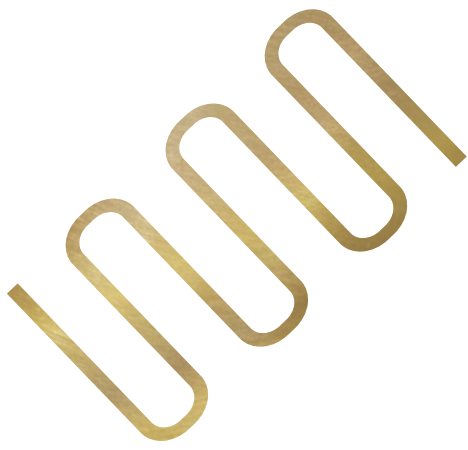
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