

Sydney Observer

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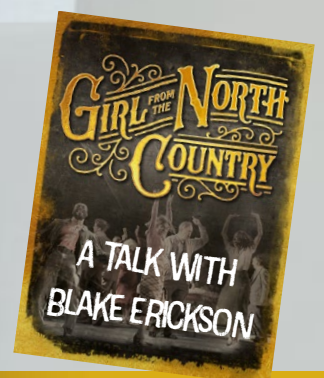
Saving the Planet Through Fashion

THE DADON SISTERS

COOKING WITH MARK BEST

AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR 2022 AWARD WINNERS

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From the Editor

February is here and so is our new issue!



At any point during the day, you have the power to change the way that you feel. New thoughts and approaches to trying situations, can be an origin of enlightenment, motivation and wonder.

However, the New Year may have felt heavy with much pressure, the two-year hangover still lingering through from 2020. We are all well and truly 'over' the turmoil that is Covid-19 but learning to live with it we must and, remembering to stay present is key.

I encourage you to endure this chapter with fortitude. Stop, reset and return to the comfort that is your breath. As Russian writer, Leo Tolstoy once said, "The two most powerful warriors are patience and time."

This issue has not one but two profiles! Our first, the inspiring Dadon sisters, talking all things fashion, and how the choices we make in this field, can help to save our planet, one vegan-clad foot at a time. The second is an interview with Chef Mark Best and his tips on leaving the Summer behind and preparing for the new season in your kitchen.

We also meet three amazing women who won at this year's Australian of the Year Awards, plus a cast member from the musical, *Girl From The North Country*. In the Home and Garden section, you can learn about lighting and your mood, read our top tips for planting, and whilst you read, take a moment to relish the fact that you have found some space to savour your copy of *Sydney Observer*.

We are grateful you are exploring our February Issue.

Jodie Wolf

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Killara	Roseville	Turramurra	Willoughby

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SNIPPETS



All Aboard the Treat-Truck at Hornsby Shire

Food Truck Fridays have returned to the Hornsby Shire featuring exciting live music performing on a unique caravan stage. Each site will be fenced, and each event will be ticketed (free) with a maximum capacity of 800 patrons. Face masks are strongly recommended for Food Truck Fridays attendees. Sample some yummy treats, including Italian pasta dishes, Greek lamb dishes, ice cream and gelato, Indonesian satay, Turkish goslème, American-style burgers, burritos, nachos, Central American tamales, tacos – and more besides! A pop-up bar will also be open. They will also be visiting Pennant Hills Library & Community Centre in March.

For locations, bookings and other details, visit: hornsby.nsw.gov.au/ftf

National Backyard Cricket is Back

National Backyard Cricket is an opportunity for enthusiasts to take time out with family and friends to enjoy a game of cricket and raise money for The Learning for a Better World (LBW) Trust in the process. The charity provides transformational educational opportunities for young men and women in the developing world. The National Backyard Cricket Chairman and LBW Trust Director, Marek Ristwej, said that the event is a wonderful way to support Australian Country Libraries and student tertiary education in cricket-playing nations.

“By registering your team to participate in National Backyard Cricket, you will be supporting libraries across regional Australia as well as tertiary education in India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Tanzania, South Africa, Afghanistan and Indonesia,” he said.

This year’s events will culminate on Sunday 6th February 2022, however Australians can get involved by playing their own Backyard Cricket Game anytime over the summer.

For more information please refer to the National Backyard Cricket website <http://nationalbackyardcricket.com.au>.

Lindfield Village Green to officially open on 14th February

The Tryon Road car park has been transformed into a new civic space with underground parking and outdoor dining. Mayor Jeff Pettett will officially open the completed project on Monday 14 February. The Village Green development includes a café and outdoor dining facilities, as well as new public toilets. Shared pathways for pedestrians and cyclists surround it. Mayor Pettett said that both residents and businesses have contributed to the completion, bringing a sense of ownership to the project. “I think the outcome is a terrific one for Lindfield and the whole Ku-ring-gai community,” he said.

WalkBack Trial Looking for Volunteers

Macquarie University Physiotherapy Department are looking for volunteers from the North Shore who have experienced back pain and do not often exercise for an NHMRC-funded research project WalkBack trial. They will be exploring whether a walking program can prevent recurrences of lower back pain. They hope that their findings will be hugely beneficial to the Australian Community.

To find out more or to volunteer, visit: walkbacktrial.com.

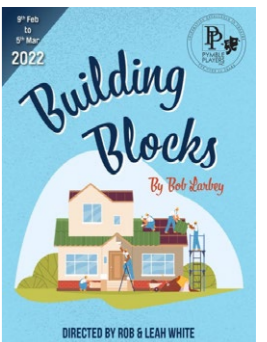
The Chatswood Year of the Tiger Festival

Celebrate luck, prosperity and good health for the new year ahead with this Covid-safe festival. Featuring art, music, performance, food, and traditional cultural celebrations. Meander your way through a series of exhibitions and artworks across the city, including a new installation of a mother and baby tigers by acclaimed artist Simone Chua from Amigo and Amigo. Enjoy stalls selling Asian and international food at the Golden Market and listen to both classical and operatic performances. The festival runs until 20th February. To find out more, visit: www.visit chatswood.com.au/LNY/About.

Building Blocks by Bob Larbey

The Pymble Players Inc bring you a comedy, directed by Rob and Leah White, that centres around the traumas two main characters experience during a domestic building extension. To find out more or book your tickets visit: www.pymbleplayers.com.au.

When: 9th February to 5th March 2022
Where: Pymble Players, Cnr Mona Vale Rd and Bromley Ave, Pymble



Ku-ring-gai is Keeping Australia Beautiful

The Keep Australia Beautiful awards has awarded three high commendations to Ku-ring-gai. Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden, a recycling project coordinated by a local family and the inaugural Ku-ring-gai Heritage Festival, have all been recognised in this year’s awards. The Festival included photo exhibitions, historical talks, a fashion exhibition and guided walks plus tours of iconic historical properties such as Rose Seidler House in Wahroonga and the iconic Tulkiyan House in Gordon. Ku-ring-gai Council was also nominated as a finalist in the Sustainable Cities category of this year’s awards, for its efforts in educating the community on sustainable living and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. For more, go to www.kabnsw.org.au/.



kg.nsw.gov.au

Ku-ring-gai Council

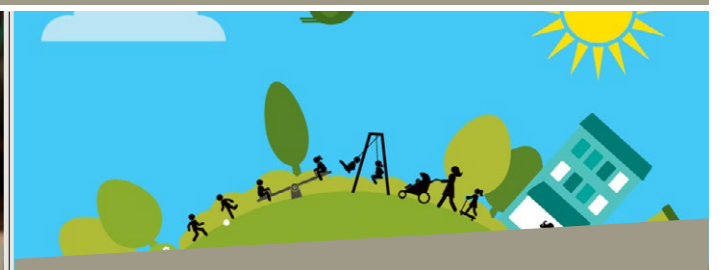


Nature play in Ku-ring-gai

Playing outdoors is great for children’s physical and mental health. We’re thinking of upgrading some playgrounds so they use nature as part of children’s play. We’d like to know what the community think of this idea.

Get more information and have your say via the online survey at kg.engagementhub.com.au/natureplay The survey closes 21 February 2022.

For more information contact Will Adames, Community Engagement Coordinator **9424 0757**.



Community Strategic Plan

Ku-ring-gai Council is reviewing its community strategic plan. Over the next few months we are asking the community what they think about the plan. As a first step between December and February 2022, we are asking residents to complete a survey. Survey results will assist us in planning for Ku-ring-gai’s future.

Get involved now by visiting kg.engagementhub.com.au/ourkg

Printed copies of the survey are also available in Council’s Customer Service Centre and local libraries.

New Year New Mayor for Ku-ring-gai

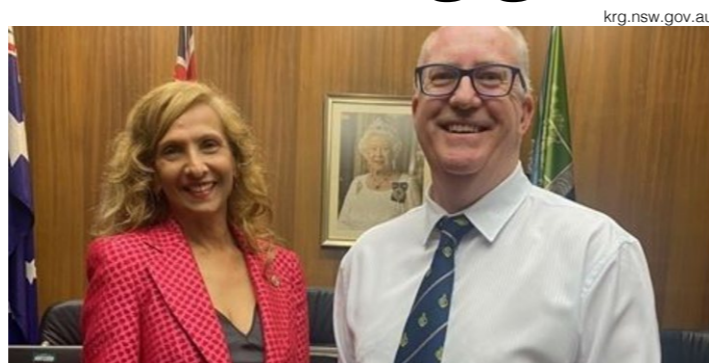
A new Mayor and Deputy Mayor have been chosen by Ku-ring-gai Council. Councillor Jeff Pettett was elected Mayor and Cr Barbara Ward was elected as Deputy Mayor.

Councillors Barbara Ward and Christine Kay were nominated for the position of Deputy Mayor and Councillor Barbara Ward was elected by a majority vote.

A long-time resident of Wahroonga, Mayor Pettett has strong links with community and sporting organisations, serving as coach and Junior President of the Kissing Point Angels Baseball Club. Mayor Pettett is a qualified accountant, a Fellow of the Institute of Accountants and a chartered tax adviser with the Tax Institute of Australia.

Deputy Mayor Barbara Ward was elected to Council in the December 2021 elections. She has lived in Gordon for 30 years and has extensive experience in the corporate and not-for-profit sectors.

Mayor Pettett said that he aimed to lead the council by listening to the community. "Our residents have gone through



a lot in the last two years, and during its term the Council is committed to achieving projects that benefit this generation of ratepayers and those who follow," he said.

"I am confident that the public will see real progress on major projects such as the Lindfield Village Hub and the St Ives youth precinct."

Mayor *Jeff Pettett* and Deputy Mayor Barbara Ward will serve in their respective roles until September 2023.

Ku-ring-gai Local Citizen of the Year Awards Winners 2022 are Announced

Groups and individuals who have made a significant contribution to the local community were once again recognized at a special ceremony on January 26th 2022. There are five Ku-ring-gai Local Citizen of the Year Awards - the Mayor's Award for Outstanding Service by a Community Group; the Mayor's Award for Outstanding Service by an Individual; the Young Environmental Citizen of the Year, the Environmental Citizen of the Year and the Citizen of the Year.

All were presented by Mayor Pettett who said that all those receiving this year's awards had demonstrated a spirit of selflessness and a willingness to push through the difficulties posed by COVID-19. "I congratulate the winners and all the many hundreds of other volunteers who have worked round the clock to help local people," he said.

The Group Award went to Easy Care Gardening, whose team of volunteer gardeners work across Ku-ring-gai helping housebound, elderly and vulnerable residents maintain their gardens.



The Mayor's individual award for outstanding service was presented to Yoel Hyman for his many forms of volunteering in the Ku-ring-gai community which include, firefighting with the Killara RFS, representing the community on the St Ives Traffic Forum and St Ives High P&C and acting as a volunteer administrator for the St Ives community Facebook page.

Oliver Conolly used his artistic talents to create cards to raise awareness of Ku-ring-gai's endangered bird populations. The 11-year-old is a keen budding ornithologist with a passion for protecting vulnerable bird species. Ku-ring-gai's Young Environmental Citizen of the Year went to Oliver.

Jen Stokes, who set up the local initiative Boomerang Bags was awarded The Environmental Citizen of the Year Award. The Boomerang Bags idea aims to reduce the amount of plastic bags circulating in Ku-ring-gai by creating centralised containers of shopping bags that residents can use and then return for others to use.

The 2022 Ku-ring-gai Citizen of the Year is Helen Jarvis. Helen's efforts have been particularly needed due to a significant increase in stress levels that the Covid-19 pandemic has caused. Helen has volunteered with the KYDS youth service for many years so that children and young people in the local community have access to free counselling support.

Australian of the Year
Awards
Reflect. Respect. Celebrate.

Australian of the Year Veena Sahajwalla

Christa Nicola

Professor Veena Sahajwalla is the Founding Director of the Centre for Sustainable Materials Research and Technology at the University of New South Wales. She is a materials scientist, engineer and inventor who is transforming the way we think about waste. She is most famous for her invention of Polymer Injection Technology, or 'Green steel'. Which means she builds steel from discarded tyres. Yes, get your head around that.

Veena works with leading universities and institutions, but most impressively, she works with industry and community groups to help develop and apply breakthrough recycling science into real-world environmental and economic benefits. That means changing the way we see waste and giving rural communities jobs. And lots of them. *Sydney Observer* spoke to Professor Sahajwalla about the power of observation, hoarding, and why the world is moving towards purposeful economics.

Growing up, Professor Sahajwalla had to work things out. She didn't know she wanted to be a scientist but knew she had to learn how things functioned, sometimes to her parent's detriment. "As a kid, I was trying to break open a coconut, and you really can't break them no matter what you do. I was uncontrollable. In an attempt to break a hard coconut, I went to our ceramic sink. And you know what broke? The sink. Not the coconut."

For Professor Sahajwalla, understanding things is paramount to seeing the world. If she doesn't understand something or isn't asking herself hundreds of questions about her latest development, she knows it won't move forward.

"You have to have that mental preparation for facing up to your toughest critics, but in a way, if you are your own toughest critic and you're asking yourself those difficult questions, then you are ready for anything anyone throws at you," she said.

For Professor Sahajwalla, part of understanding how something will work is observation and imagination. She needs to see a waste product and imagine what it could be. She did her sabbatical in the states at a steel factory to learn by doing and watching.



"Even if you are on the shop floor and you're doing the practical things, that might look like it's not that important, but it's always that power of observation. You are learning by doing."

When I ask Professor Sahajwalla why she was so interested in waste, she laughs and covers her face with her hands. "I'm a bit of a hoarder, you know. I don't like to throw anything out. I'm like surely if you find a way to do something else with this [waste] it's useful again, I'll tuck it away for later."

She believes this way of thinking has led to her seeing waste differently. Being open and finding purpose seems to be at the forefront of Professor Sahajwalla's thinking. And now, possibly the world.

"I hear people say, 'well, everything you run, in terms of business always has to be about economies of scale,' but I often say 'no, it should also be about economies of purpose'.

"If you're always going to think about things getting bigger and bigger, then we are never going to live in harmony with our planet."

The Life Changing Abla Kadous

NSW State Recipient Senior Australian of the Year 2022

Christa Nicola

Sometimes you meet someone who makes you want to be a better person. Abla Kadous is a woman with the heart of an angel and the strength of a spartan. A rare spirit that should be celebrated. She was a champion rower in Egypt, and her racing spirit has continued in her passion for bringing people together from all different cultures. She saw first-hand how hard it was for her family to adjust to life in Australia after arriving from Egypt and helped set up the country's first welfare service for Muslim women - all while being a devoted wife and mother to five children. She then created the not-for-profit Islamic Women's Welfare Association (IWWA), of which she is currently President. The organisation brings together women from all cultures who are starting a life in Australia. The centre helps women feel a part of a family Abla has created. The organisation offers anti-discrimination forums, school-readiness programs, youth camps, cooking classes and events. *Sydney Observer* had the incredible opportunity to chat to Abla about family tradition, Jiu-jitsu and why you should never judge a book by its cover.

Abla Kadous's eyes light up when she talks about her work. The love she has for what she does seems to be never-ending. "I'm so blessed. I'm so blessed with everything that happened in my life. It shows on me, and it shows in the work that I do. I give the women practical advice from my own life. Many of the women are so grateful. "They say you changed our life."

She believes women need to be the foundation of a home to keep tradition moving through the generations and give children accountability.

"I truly believe there is so much emphasis on the structure of the family, and Australia is not paying attention to this. We are



australianoftheyear.org.au

losing our youth because the mother is too busy.

"The head of the family figure holds the family together. The younger kids know respect. All the people that come here without a connected family, the children grow up, and this is what causes the grudges in the family.

"Children are like the seed that you put in the soil. The soil is the community, and the water that you give the seed is the parents."

So much of what Abla has put into the centre comes from what women need or ask for. She mentions an incident a year ago in Paramatta where a pregnant woman in her hijab was sitting at a café with friends, and a man attacked and beat her.

"From this time, I said, girls, you need to learn self-defence." So, she incorporated Jiu-Jitsu into the centre.

Abla's strength seems never-ending. Her forums keep everyone communicating. If someone needs money or furniture, the women are there. The state-of-the-art centre the charity is run from, they own outright. They built together for "a group of Muslim women who don't have much money, we wanted to reach our community, and I'm proud of everyone that helped."

"We've proven that Muslim women are normal human beings. Even though we cover our hair or dress in a practical way, we are still clever enough to develop and create a centre like the one we have."

The Incredible Stamina of Shanna Whan

NSW State Recipient Local Hero Australian of the Year 2022

Christa Nicola

As a child, all Shanna Whan wanted was to live and work on the land, chase sunsets, raise a family, and spend her days on horseback working with stock. But at the age of 40, Shanna became an alcoholic at breaking point. It was at this time in her life she knew she needed to make a change - to herself and those in the rural community. Making it through 20 years of hardship and recovering from alcoholism, Shanna started *Sober in the Country* charity (SITC), a grassroots bush charity leading social impact and change across rural Australia through peer support, education, advocacy, and the #OK2SAYNO campaign. Now she has won the 'Local hero' Australian of the year and continues to drive a positive path for those suffering in the community. *Sydney Observer* was thrilled to chat to Shanna about her charity, her life and the fundamental issues in geographical isolation.

Shanna Whan is from Maules Creek in north-western NSW and grew up living like a gypsy from town-to-town, job-to-job, running from herself and her past. Several childhood traumatic events led her to drink and live a lie, trying to be what other people thought she was.

"I knew I was in trouble as far back as my early 20's, to be honest. But because society insisted I was a 'party girl and not a 'problem drinker,' I stopped listening to my own instinct. My traumas made me crave the attention and approval of others - and I performed like a circus monkey in exchange for popularity," she says.

Her charity was built from Shanna finally listening to her instincts, quitting drinking and dedicating her life to help others. "I knew from the day I had my last drink that my life's work would be doing whatever I could to help others. I have had utter conviction in that from day one. With nothing left to lose and all the skills at my fingertips - it was simply what I had to do. It's burned like a fire in my bones since 22nd Feb 2015 to do exactly what I am doing right now."

She believes alcohol abuse is a problem regardless of postcode but thinks distance and rural living makes the issues bigger. "We are stuck in the same social circle with severely limited options outside of it - and that, for me, is the most devastating aspect of rural life for a non-drinker. It can turn into a very lonely life if you don't fit the mould."

After seven years of working on her charity and seeing the changes SITC has made in people's lives, she feels content.

"I wouldn't swap sobriety for all the money in the world. I love my life today."



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Sydney Observer

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Neighbourhood Watch in Ku-ring-gai and Hornsby: Marking Driveways

Cr Simon Lennon

Neighbourhood Watch groups are involved with many aspects of personal safety and the protection of personal property. One little known aspect of both is the need for cars to be able to enter and leave driveways safely, without striking cars parked at the side of the road or needing to veer out onto the road to avoid those cars.

Parking across driveways or overlapping driveways is illegal. In the worst cases, residents are unable to drive their cars into or out of their driveways altogether, especially near schools around drop-off and pick-up times and near railway stations for whole days, while commuters are at work.

Residents can become trapped at home, or those returning home and guests

must park far away. Tradesmen can become unable to work. Garbage trucks can't empty bins.

To prevent these problems, some homes have white lines on the road on either side of their driveway, which alert drivers to where they need to park. Small hooks at the outermost ends of the white lines alert drivers to the safe side on which to park. When times are dark, wet, or cloudy, the white lines normally remain unmistakable.

The white lines affect drivers' behaviour. Parking their cars, most drivers innately comply with the lines, which also keep their cars safe from collision.

Neighbourhood Watch in Ku-ring-gai and Hornsby offers a wooden stencil for Ku-ring-gai residents to borrow, for free, and paint those lines. The stencil kit includes a copy of the

relevant regulations, a safe procedure, a suggestion for the best type of paint to use, traffic cones to stand nearby while the paint dries, and high visibility vests for people to wear while painting the lines.

Residents will need a car to transport the stencil kit. Pick up is currently from Gordon or East Killara.

Ku-ring-gai council supports this Neighbourhood Watch initiative. Further information is available from the Neighbourhood Watch in Ku-ring-gai and Hornsby website <https://au-nhwkuringgaihornsby.org/>.

Neighbourhood Watch can take bookings to borrow a stencil kit through that website or by email to nhwkuringgaihornsby@gmail.com. Any inquiries may be directed to Julia Eagles or Simon Lennon.



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1920s Maybelline advertisement.

LOCAL HISTORY

Lindfield's First Hairdressers

Ku-ring-gai Historical Society

The Puff Box was opened in 1926 by three sisters - Daisy, Dorothy and Mary Newton Scott. For three local middle-class ladies, this was a brave venture, even in the much freer 1920s.

In 1922 there were 40 ladies' hairdressers in the whole of Sydney. By 1925 this number had grown to 67, but on the North Shore, there were only three, at North Sydney, Crows Nest and Roseville.

The sisters learnt different skills that would complement each other to form a business, between them learning hairdressing, haircutting, permanent waving and chiropody. In the period following World War I, the fashion of bobbing made hair cutting much more important than it had been for many years.

The Puff Box was established in rented ground floor premises, part of the newly built Government Savings Bank building on the Highway at Lindfield. This site allowed for a shop window and an entry door on the northern corner.

Privacy was provided for clients by dividing the shop into cubicles with six-foot high partitions. Opposite the door was a

reception area with a glass display showing cosmetics, costume jewellery and hair adornments from Paris, as well as other items for sale.

Behind the reception area was the office. The back door led into the rear garden with its outdoor toilet.

The hairdressing cubicles were furnished with three dark-stained oak dressing tables with plate glass tops, and under the glass were panels of embroidery, which their eldest sister had sent from China: blue satin embroidered in gold thread.

On the plate glass sat a hand mirror and an oblong moulded glass dish containing antiseptic, into which were placed the used combs, etc., prior to washing. Sterilisation of combs and scissors was carried out, even though this was not generally practised in those times.

They also had sets of collars made for clients to go underneath the capes. These were washed by Tiny, the washerwoman, who visited each week from Gordon.

The business was highly successful, and they employed a young trainee. Decoration of the shop window always attracted attention, and local occasions

were featured. The GPS Head of The Riverboat race was celebrated regularly with miniature cardboard skiffs and oars, baby celluloid dolls dressed in the schools' colours, and with the window decorated to look like a race scene. Jubilees and coronations were likewise celebrated.

By 1939 hairdressing had become very competitive in Lindfield, with another eight shops competing for a not greatly increased clientele, so at that stage, it was decided that the time had come to close the shop.

The full story of the three ladies behind The Puff Box appears in "Women of Ku-ring-gai" published by the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society, available for \$24 plus postage from www.khs.org.au/large-books.

A longer version of this article was originally published in the Society's annual publication, *The Historian* in March 1999, written by Elizabeth Roberts. *The Historian* series offers a vast range of articles of local interest. Details of how to obtain copies can be found at www.khs.org.au/the-historian.

The Ku-ring-gai Historical Society's activities can be found on its website, www.khs.org.au.

Double the Fun with The Dadon Sisters

Jodie Wolf



Inspired fashionistas on a mission to evoke change, the Dadon Sisters are making waves with their hugely successful, vegan footwear label TWOOBS. *Sydney Observer* spoke with the terrific twosome about their aspirations to save the planet and their plans for the year ahead.

It all began as, “influencers” (they say with a hint of sarcasm), and the inspiration for their brand came through their then blog, How Two Live. “It was a lot of running around wearing fabulous outfits. As most women can attest to, fabulous is usually a euphemism for uncomfortable. One too many rolled ankles later, we decided to launch our own comfy-but-still-cool footwear.”

Bravely, they decided in 2022, to redesign, moving away from the trend-based footwear their customers adored, in favour of an “everyday staple” with a strong environmental focus. Now a mix of recycled and natural materials, they replaced the plastics in the soles with sugarcane and a layer of memory foam cushions your sole.

Stef, 33 and Jess, 29, were brought up in a “big, loud, extended family.” Their father is Jewish, Moroccan and their Mother has Eastern European heritage, which explains their striking looks.

“We’re part sisters, part business partners, part soul mates. Growing up our relationship was always very loving and inclusive,” Stef says.

“We shared a lot. Jess would sleep in my room when she was scared. Cute sister stuff like that.”

“We always had a dream of working together in fashion. We used to fantasize about having a store called the Dadon House—part store, part café. People could come and feel like they were shopping, while our brother made them a latte.”

Jess says, “We’re scarily similar. We agree on everything, say the same things at the same time, like all the same things. Our poor boyfriends find it incredibly annoying!”

When it comes to helping the planet, it is clearly a top priority for them. Hey TWOOBS is their latest endeavour, a podcast



Jam on Your Collar Photography



where they tackle tough questions about fashion and the environment.

“We don’t want to take away from the government’s inaction because to put it eloquently, it freaking stinks,” states Jess.

Stef tells me, “The rate at which we consume has become pretty outrageous. Australians are the world’s second largest consumers, buying 27kgs of clothing per year, sending 23kgs to landfill. We’d love to see people everywhere buying less, repairing more, and purchasing much more thoughtfully.”

It sounds like these two are forever on the go. I ask them how true that is.

“We try not to be too busy. We’re recovering workaholics. We started our careers in the ‘girl boss’ era where it was cool to wear the number of hours you worked like a badge of honour,” explains Jess.

“In 2020, we took time to reinvent. Now, we work smarter not harder. You’ll find us walking the beach, spending time pursuing other passions. I’m a yoga teacher and Stef is studying to be a meditation teacher.”

So, what else for 2022? Well, let’s just say that the sisters may have hinted that you could be wearing a winter style from TWOOBS sooner than you think.

To keep up to date with Jess and Stef, check out their Instagrams @twoobs @howtwolive.

Diving Deeper

One thing that you are proud of from 2021. Our TWOOBS x Cungelella collection where we collaborated with First Nations artist Glenda McCulloch.

Who gives the best hugs on the planet? Our golden retrievers, Panther and Sunny.

Favourite childhood toy? Tamagotchi – kind of wish we still had ours.

Who’s ‘in charge?’ Neither of us, and both of us.

If you were an animal what would you be and why? Dolphins in the ocean. They always seem like they’re having a good time.

Beach and cloudy or mountains and sunny? Beach and sunny. Can you tell we’re entrepreneurs?

What three things make up the perfect day? Blue sky, our family, lots of dogs.

One item of clothing/ small accessory you can’t live without? Brown slides from TWOOBS!



Stunning Local Valentines Day Flowers

Christa Nicola

Valentine's Day is a time of year to celebrate your love, friendship or admiration with someone special. It can be a very close friend, a partner or someone you know who needs a pick me up. With all this in mind, we thought we'd dive into some of the local florists on the North Shore to get some insight into the best little love bundles one can buy.

Magnolia and Eucalypt (Turramurra)

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<https://www.theposyplace.com.au/page/florist-lindfield>

Ph: 80657979



Ipsen Botanica (West Pymble)

Describing their flowers as floral artistry, Ipsen Botanica specialises in floral arrangements for all special occasions creating that perfect gift. From bright, rich natives to red roses and stylish whites, let the florists put together a personalised bouquet to make anyone swoon.

<https://ipsenbotanica.com/>

Ph: 0407431207

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<https://www.gordonflowerdelivery.com.au/valentines-day/in-au-264365#>

Ph: 0422420994

A year of purpose

As we are faced with our third year of the pandemic, Jo Hutchens owner and founder of Well Versed Homes shares her thoughts on how we are living a life full of purpose and promise for the future.

"If you know me, you know how much I love home," explains Jo, "our homes have become so much more important to us during this time and in my view, this is a great outcome."

Despite the struggles of working or schooling from home, we have taken a fresh look at our surroundings and injected some new life into tired or well-worn spaces, to give the feeling of comfort, security and hope. Many of our clients have redefined what is important and have taken bold personal steps to ensure they are living a life of purpose and connection with people they care for, and all this starts at home."

Jo encourages us that some of the most important conversations and memories of our lives will occur in the home and there is no better time to think about some fresh paint, even a new colour scheme or some lovely soft furnishings and lighting, to ensure we are creating a cocooning environment which is cohesive and can help improve organisation, lifestyle and wellbeing.



"Homes shouldn't be perfect, because they are filled with imperfect people," Jo laughs. "Our homes should be welcoming and open – that's what's most important. That's how we live a life of purpose, a life that means we are focused on others, a life that ensures we have hope for the future."

Jo provides an interior and exterior colour consultancy and design service and offers

advice, experience, and guidance if you are building, renovating, embarking on a fixer upper or simply reorganising one room to accommodate change.

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www.wellversedhomes.com

Do you find making paint selections daunting?

HOW CAN THERE BE SO MANY WHITES?

The colour palette of your home is an essential component of interior design, but many find the process stressful and confusing.

Jo is a qualified interior decorator and colour stylist and offers expert advice to make the process enjoyable.

- In-home/online colour consultation
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Improving your Space

Sarah Harvey

Think about small differences you can make to improve the rooms that you live in. One tip that a friend gave me is to always treat your home as if a loved one is about to visit for the first time. Think of how nice you'd want to make it for them and try to channel all of that all of the time. You want your home to reflect your personality, and for it to be a haven from the outside world.

THINK ABOUT LIGHTING AND AIR

Japanese temples are traditionally designed to bring in as much air and light as possible. Getting fresh air into your rooms will make you feel far more energized than breathing in stale, old air. Rather than a big overhead light, invest in lamps and candles to make the space feel cosier and warmer.

BRING THE OUTSIDE INSIDE

In the same way that traditional Japanese homes have moveable walls on the outside to reduce the feeling of divide between interior and garden, think of ways you can introduce the outside into your home. Can you think of ways that you can make your home more seasonal? Research plants that are in season.

IMPROVE YOUR STORAGE SOLUTIONS

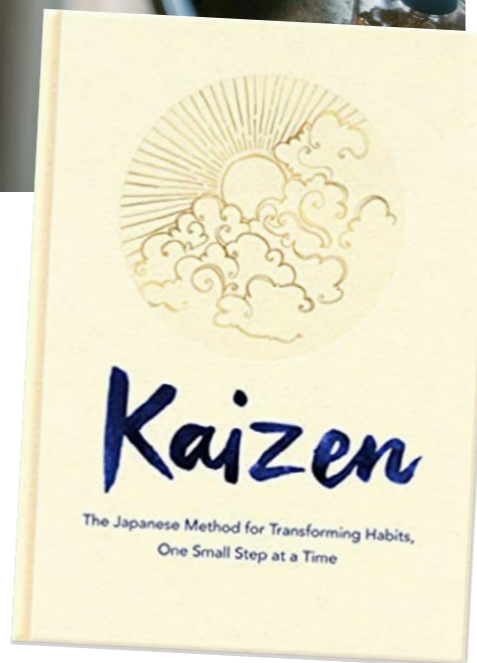
Cheap and attractive boxes and baskets can be found really easily these days and are so useful for keeping all of your small miscellaneous items, such as make-up and chargers, in one place.

PERSONALIZE YOUR SPACE

Decorating your home with memories of your life is the easiest and cheapest way to bring personality into the space and make you feel more at home. Invest in some picture frames and frame your photos and any prints or posters that you own. Lots of charity shops or flea markets have picture frames you can buy for next-to-nothing. Corkboards are also an excellent way to pin up postcards, photos and other memories that mean something to you.

INTRODUCE SOME COLOUR

Painting a wall a different colour can have a transformative effect and it doesn't have to cost very much at all. If you have landed a landlord who won't let you decorate, then invest in some colourful cushion covers, curtains or patterned rugs. Make sure that you keep an eye on eBay, Gumtree, Facebook, Freecycle and other local sites where you can pick up furnishings for free at very low cost- which has the added bonus of being more environmentally friendly.



SURROUND YOURSELF WITH NICE SMELLS

Opening your windows regularly and keeping your home clean- especially the carpets and soft furnishings- should eliminate any nasty smells but introducing good smells into your house can also promote relaxation and make the space feel more pleasant. Use scented candles, buy a reed or oil diffuser, burn incense or buy fresh flowers. Boiling citrus fruit and fresh herbs in water on your stove works as a great natural potpourri and adding lime or lemon juice to (cold) light bulbs creates a fresh scent when the light is switched on.

This is an edited excerpt from the book Kaizen - The Japanese Method for Transforming Habits, One Small Step at a Time by Sarah Harvey, Bluebird

Planting in February

February is the perfect time to be thinking forward when it comes to planting your veggies. Here's a list of some of our favourite seeds to sow, with some tips and tricks to apply during this classic transitional month. Happy planting.

LEEKS

Leeks will thrive in a sunny, open position with friable soil, abundant in organic matter. To save four to six weeks of growing time, buy them as seedlings.

BETROOT

It can take two to three months for your beets to grow to 30-50mm wide, but you can use their leaves for salads from six weeks on. Always be sure to leave four or five on the plant so that the plant will continue to grow.

PEAS

Plant with at least a 15cm gap to give young peas enough room to spread. Water in the morning, avoiding the foliage and only when the soil feels dry. Overwatering can really damage your peas.

CARROTS

February soil will be warm and so you should have seedlings emerging within a fortnight but be patient as they can be slow to germinate. Good drainage is vital in preventing rot-related disease.

PARSNIPS

Popular parsnip varieties include White Gold and Hollow Crown. They take 18-20 weeks to fully mature but try not to let them grow too big. Parsnips (*Pastinaca sativa*) grow best in a crumbly, open soil.

TOMATOES

Tomatoes love a top quality soil with a pH of 6.5-6.7. You can slice a tomato in quarters, plant it in the ground and it will grow. Other ways to plant could be in pots, hanging baskets or raised garden beds.



CORN

Plant in four-by-four blocks to encourage germination. Separate the top of the leaves to test for ripeness. If the grain is milky when pressed by your fingernail, it is ready.

ZUCCHINI

Zucchini's love full sun and can be planted directly into soil or in a seed tray, twice their own depth. Treat regularly with liquid fertilisers such as compost or seaweed.



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Silvereye bird (*Zosterops lateralis*).

Bringing the Birds Back

Alan Toner

Whilst leading a walking tour of Middle Head bushland in Sydney Harbour National Park, a child asked me, “why don’t we see these little birds in our streets at home?” The children were marvelling at Silvereys (*Zosterops lateralis*) and Variegated Fairywrens (*Malurus lamberti*) as they darted through the Heath Banksia (*Banksia ericifolia*). These children had never seen birds like this before and the reason we don’t see birds like these and others like them is simple. No habitat offers them food or shelter in our streets.

Improving habitat for birdlife can be through biodiversity corridors. These do connect natural bushland and encourage an increase in diversity of plants and animals but are often complex projects that involve a multitude of bureaucracy.

However, rewilding green spaces within your local community is an easier option. Whether it is in your own street across a few neighbouring balconies and gardens or maybe transforming an underutilised green space in the local park. You can plan and create a low-cost community garden where native plants, birds and people can interact.

In Mosman, there’s a Discovery Garden of native plants that aims to encourage just that. The garden all started when a small group of community members came together and began to plan the transformation of an underutilised area of grass in Memory Park. Mosman Council gave the community initiative two green thumbs up and provided essential tools, mulch and native plants to get the native garden started. Some of the plant species found in the garden include Large-leaf Bush Pea (*Pultenaea daphnoides*), Happy

Wanderer (*Hardenbergia violacea*), Heath Banksia and even a Sydney Red Gum (*Angophora costata*). The diversity of native herbs, shrubs and trees selected for the Discovery Garden are found in the Sydney Harbour National Park. Perfect for providing essential habitat for a variety of rarely seen birdlife.

Although this garden is small, it will inevitably improve the connectivity between people of Mosman, birdlife and the surrounding bushland. You too can create a low-cost native garden in your community just like this one and bring the birds back to your streets. All you need is an inspiration.

Alan Toner is the owner and founder of Sydney Harbour EcoWalks Tours. Visit www.ecowalktours.com.au

Powerful Mood Lighting For Your Home

Christa Nicola

Lighting in the home is one of the best ways to create an atmosphere. We are all very sensitive to light, so much so that it can affect how we feel. Do you want to create an intimate dinner party or an energised cocktail event? We got the lowdown on how to make subtle light changes in the home to create ambience for any occasion.

Dimmer lights are an easy way to bring a room from bright to warm very quickly, but what effect does that have on your guests?

Sydney Observer spoke to Robert Gifford, an environmental psychologist and Professor of Psychology and Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria, to get his insights. “Dim lights have the reputation of eliciting more intimate conversation, the other conventional wisdom is that very bright lights help crime investigators get confessions.”

If you want to turn one space into another with a flick of a switch, should dimmers be on every light in the house?

Sydney Observer chatted to Interior designer Jodie Coleman from Coco Republic in Alexandria to understand what one can do to alter their homes’ feelings.

“Lighting must address practical and aesthetic purposes for each space while being able to change the mood of a room and the energy levels of the people inhabiting it,” she said.



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“A multi-purpose space, such as living and dining rooms, will require a mix of lights.

“Ceiling downlights positioned in a grid pattern on the ceiling will light the floor in a multi-purpose space. The living room will usually include task lighting such as floor lamps, table lamps and sometimes downlights to highlight signature items in the room.”

Jodie thinks the dining room is about statement lighting, usually hanging pendant lights. The idea is to open a room up. The bigger the space, the bigger the pendant light.

“This will serve the practical purpose of lighting up the dining area while being decorative and adding atmosphere, and essentially the mood,” she said.

“A warm light would be preferable in creating

a cosy atmosphere and a dimmer to adjust the mood for the right occasion. This creates a room within the room.”



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When We All Stood Up for the Queen

Margaret Simpson

Before the advent of TV, and even into the 1950s and '60s, the most popular entertainment after playing or watching sport, was going to the pictures.

The session began with the curtains parting and *God Save the Queen*, played to the accompaniment of the fluttering Union Jack and the Queen sitting side-saddle on her horse. Everyone in the theatre stood to attention. We were so conditioned that decades later in lounge rooms some baby boomers still feel the urge to stand when it's played on TV.

Children's matinees on Saturday afternoons were an institution, especially in the '50s. There would be cartoons and shorts including a Western serial with cowboys and Indians. This was followed by the main feature, anything from Tarzan to Robin Hood and Sinbad to Davy Crockett. Kids would play up and roll Jaffas down the stalls. Adults attended in the evenings, with some sitting in the same reserved seats, year after year. Everyone dressed up, men in suits and women in frocks and gloves.

Some cinemas only had one big film projector so when it was time to change the reels (there were usually three or four of them), the show would have to stop each time. Sometimes the film would break accompanied by jeers from the teenage audience.

As early as 1953, in advance of the TV threat, theatre chains like Hoyts installed widescreen Cinemascope equipment where big picture epics were shown like *The Sound of Music*, *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Dr Zhivago*, and *The Ten Commandments*.

As more families could afford a TV, many cities, suburban and country cinemas began to close. Some are still around, obvious from their characteristic Spanish Mission or Art Deco facades, converted to furniture shops, warehouses and even roller-skating rinks.



Spanish Mission-style James Theatre at Dungog.

When Everything Feels Out of Our Control

Dr Sue Ferguson

It's certainly a difficult time, with the ongoing pandemic feeling so uncontrollable and frustratingly unpredictable too. Usually, there is much more that we can control, and evidence suggests that having this control belief (believing that our actions make a difference to important outcomes) is associated with better health and wellbeing. Furthermore, loss of control can lead to a sense of helplessness and even depression. So, in these trying times, what can we do?

It's important to acknowledge and accept the emotions that often come with uncertainty and lack of control (such as helplessness, frustration, anger, and grief at what we've lost and are missing out on). Focusing on and accepting the present through mindfulness can help with this <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/consumer-health/in-depth/mindfulness-exercises/art-20046356>.

There are also ways to increase perceived control:

- 1. Informational Control.** Find accurate information, so you can take appropriate action (even if sometimes the action is to rest).
- 2. Decisional Control.** Make any small decisions you still can, and act on them.
- 3. Behavioural techniques.** Plan and carry out a small achievable task, and then another and another, gradually increasing their level of difficulty. As you achieve these outcomes, your sense of self-efficacy (the belief that you can do tasks and achieve goals that are important to you) will gradually increase.

Remember there are still some things we can control, such as performing behaviours to reduce the chances of us catching COVID (like getting a booster shot and a wearing



mask, and not going to crowded indoor events), or if we do catch COVID to reduce our chances of passing it on to others.

As the popular poem by Reinhold Niebuhr says, "grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

Dr Sue Ferguson is an Honorary Associate Lecturer with the School of Psychological Sciences at Macquarie University.



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Essential Home Care Equipment

Rejimon Punchayil

Our seniors are one of the most vulnerable groups facing this current Covid-19 challenge. It's only natural that families embrace the responsibility of looking after their loved ones in the comfort of their own homes during this time. A bit of planning and preparation in addition to good intention will make the task manageable. Let's look at some bare essential equipment for the purpose.

A lot will depend on the level of care required for your loved one. An Occupational Therapist, an Assistive

Technology Specialist or someone responsible at a discharge hospital will provide suitable advice. Please ensure the access to the home, within the home, especially to kitchen and bathroom are free of any impediment and with adequate lighting. Create clear, uncluttered pathways, by removing loose throw rugs, electric cords and unwanted furniture.

A shower chair/stool, shower mat, an over the toilet aid, grab rails or in a complex situation, a shower commode is essential. You may consider an electric bed and a suitable mattress. A height-adjustable day chair or an electric rise recliner is recommended.

A walking aid or a trolley walker and a tilting over bed/chair table on castors will be helpful. Other solutions to give some thought a Raizer (to lift a person off the floor after a fall that requires no medical attention), a walking belt, a hoist with a sling, a powered wheelchair or a mobility scooter, a personal alarm system and aids to manage incontinence.

Look for safety and convenience around Kitchen, bathroom and bedroom not only for the one in your care but also for the carer.

If you find any of these terms unfamiliar do a google search or call your local assistive technology specialist at www.comfordiscovered.com for any questions.

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Return to School or Home Schooling

Ian Sweeney

Back to school is an exciting time for both children and parents alike. However, what is not exciting is the increase in decay in children's teeth the dental profession is seeing today. As children return to school, it is important to be aware of many "hidden" snacks in your child's diet. Birthday cake, cupcakes and other snacks may creep into your child's diet without you ever being aware.

COVID has resulted in many changes in our society as well as at school. During the last homeschooling period, many parents made the comment that, "the kids do nothing but eat all day." When the children did go back to school, any school birthday "treats" took the form of individually packaged surprises that have the potential to increase dental decay.

Tooth decay is caused by bacteria in our mouths. When we consume sugary foods and drinks, the bacteria will use the sugar to produce acid. It is this acid that dissolves the teeth causing cavities.

The longer a sugary food is in the mouth, the more potential it has to cause decay. An example of this is comparing eating a piece of cake with a packet of lollies. Once the cake is eaten the risk of decay slowly reduces over time. The lollies on the other hand are small and last longer, especially if sucked. Once one lolly is finished, another is popped into the mouth. The overall length of time the sugar from the lollies has to act on the teeth is far greater, thus potentially causing more decay.

In Australia, approximately 50% of children have experienced dental decay in at least one permanent tooth by the age of 12 years.

Many foods that are believed to be healthy snacks may actually be causing decay. Foods such as sultanas, dried fruit, health and muesli bars, may lead to dental decay. Cooked starches such as

potato chips, crackers and bread may in fact take a longer time to clear from the mouth, leading to a risk of tooth decay.

Children love nothing better than sipping frozen juice bottles on a hot day. Although refreshing, the frozen drink will also prolong the sugar content in the mouth, potentially increasing the decay risk. As such, water still 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 provide large amounts of much-needed calcium, which will help to prevent cavities. Cheddar, Swiss and mozzarella cheese all stimulate saliva glands which will help to protect teeth by neutralising acid produced after eating sugary snacks.

Back to school may also mean back to sports. Mouthguards are one of the simplest ways to protect your child's teeth. Even children as young as seven have the potential to damage their permanent teeth and should be wearing a mouthguard. 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.

Should you have any questions or concerns about your child's teeth, please ask your dentist sooner rather than later. Remember, when it comes to dental decay, an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure.



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

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

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How Small Changes Make New Habits, with Lasting Positive Effects on Health

Sarah Wainwright

Prioritising health comes with making small changes and adopting new habits, which become part of a new routine. While preparing to take action, setting some specific goals that you would like to achieve is useful. Small changes to improve health may include reducing sugar, reducing caffeine and alcohol, increasing water intake and physical activity, getting to bed earlier and catching up on medical appointments for instance.

Enjoying a coffee catch-up with my walking, talking, book club buddy Dr Elizabeth Tracey, Consultant Epidemiologist with Epidemiological Consulting, we chatted about some of the additional adverse health costs of Covid-19. Elizabeth explains, "One of the most important issues that can impact on our health is regular cancer screening. If screening is delayed or missed, it is possible that a precancerous abnormality may progress to cancer, or a cancer may develop to a later stage. This is particularly relevant as many of us have been in lockdown or unable to access screening services because they have been closed.

To illustrate the point, Elizabeth notes that, "According to a recent analysis from the

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, the number of screening mammograms performed through BreastScreen Australia significantly declined in March 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic worsened and tighter restrictions were put in place that included a suspension of all BreastScreen services from 25 March 2020. Modelling undertaken by the Cancer Council suggests that a six-month delay in breast cancer diagnosis would result in 25 excess deaths over the next five years and 239 years lost over a ten-year time horizon in the Australian setting."

From UK data Elizabeth adds, "There would be substantial increases in the number of avoidable cancer deaths in England as a result of diagnostic delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, interventions would be necessary to manage the backlog of routine diagnostic services in order to mitigate the expected impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on patients with cancer." (Maringe C., 2021). Finally, Elizabeth suggests catching up on screening and health checkups that may have been missed during 2020 and 2021 and keeping healthy habits.

Prioritising Health and Creating New Habits

- Focus on one or two small and easy changes at a time, build from there
- Repeat the new habit to build the confidence to stick with the change
- Reward yourself, thus establishing a positive association of putting the habit into practise (for me, it's pairing walking with destination coffee!)
- When your brain starts expecting the reward (craving endorphins, enjoying a sense of accomplishment) then the new habit becomes automatic
- Anticipate pitfalls, note what caused the stumble and start over with a modified plan
- Buddy up- tell others your goal, engage a support team and report progress!

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

Pushing Boundaries with Mark Best

Christa Nicola

Mark Best is not your average chef. He has won Chef of the Year in the annual Sydney Morning Herald Good Food Guide, Restaurant of the Year in Australian Gourmet Traveller, Sydney Morning Herald, Time Out magazine, the Restaurant and Catering Association's Awards for Excellence and is an AEG Ambassador. *Sydney Observer* had the chance to chat with Mark about his greatest moments as a chef and how you can cook delicious Autumn dishes.

Can you recall the moment you fell in love with cooking? And was there a particular dish?

There is no one particular moment rather a series of memories I have that remain vivid; picking cherry plums with my Great Grandmother and then her showing me how to test the 'set' of the jam. Eating jam from her wooden spoon.

What kind of influence do you think your photography has on your cooking? And do you think being creative breeds a rebellion into your view on the world and how you cook?

Cooking and photography are much the same to me. You are essentially telling a story in every plate or image. As far as rebellion, I don't consider myself a rebel, although I do naturally shy away from conformity to the status quo.

Travelling the world and cooking must've been an incredible experience for you. Do you have a specific country or city to which you feel most connected?

The one destination that I am most connected to and has had the most profound influence is Sydney. I feel incredibly fortunate to have trained here.

Now that we are coming into Autumn, what dishes and produce would you recommend to 'wow' a dinner party?

I would propose roast goose or duck with whole roasted quinces studded with cloves and star anise. Maybe for dessert, the last of the figs and peaches or new season's nightingale persimmons.



"Cooking and photography are much the same to me. You are essentially telling a story in every plate or image."

If you were having a group of friends over for brunch in March, what would be two dishes you would have to cook?

I would probably cure some ocean trout in salt and sugar and cold smoke it. I would serve this with soft boiled eggs fried in turmeric and basmati rice stir-fried with korma spices, onion and peppers. Autumn is the end of the plums like my all-time favourite, the delicious and dark fleshed Queen Garnet. I love to roast these whole with a sprinkle of brown sugar, vanilla bean and star anise. Served at room temperature with a dollop of double cream, there is nothing better.

What's on the horizon for Mark Best in 2022...? Is there anything that readers should keep their eyes peeled for?

More genius

Would you share with readers your top tips for preparing for Autumn cooking?

1. Look for ingredients in full season. They will be delicious, in abundance, and cheap.
2. Plan your menu according to point 1. This will give you plenty of options for recipes while also giving you the chance to be creative when it comes to the final dishes you serve to your guests.

3. Keep dishes simple and delicious. Prepare as much as possible ahead of the guests arriving. The Stop+Go function on AEG induction cooktops helps you do just that. It lets you switch to keep-warm mode.

4. Autumn is Pinot Noir weather. Buy the best you can afford - quality over quantity.

Now is the time to take Mark's advice and have people over for a beautiful Autumn spread, all while keeping his inventive, lavish and creative flair in the air.

Keep up with Mark Best at www.markbest.com.au and via Instagram @markbest.



Girl from the North Country

Jodie Wolf

The joy of theatre has returned and with it a new year promising a selection of incredible shows.

One not to be missed is the Musical extravaganza, *Girl from the North Country*.

Actor, Blake Erickson, 36, from Sydney plays Elias Burke and is thrilled to be working again. He said that for him, the lockdowns for theatre during the height of the pandemic were, "rough."

"I had a total of five shows cancel either during rehearsal, mid-season, and even before they could start." Not to be disheartened however he returned to university and studied for a degree in arts administration. "I even took my first flying lesson!" he told *Sydney Observer*.

"I understand how fortunate I am to be working when so many of my peers are still waiting to return to the stage. I don't take it for granted."

Having been performing for over a decade, Blake trained, "mostly on the job," but also at the University of Sydney and at the Actor's Connection in New York. He says that he loves his job and, "If I could do this until the day, I drop dead, I'll be happy."

Written and directed by Conor McPherson, the story takes us back in time to American life in 1934 Minnesota, where people

who are residing in a guest house are contemplating their past and their future whilst facing the reality of unspoken facts in their present.

The recently re-furbished Theatre Royal is incredibly special to Blake as he recalls seeing iconic shows in the 1990s such as *The Phantom of the Opera* and *Les Misérables*. He tells me that he would sit on a booster seat as a child and it was there that he knew he wanted to work in musical theatre. "I still cannot believe I get to work here," he says.

Bob Dylan's musical score sets the pace for the story and I ask Blake about his music and how much he knew of it before diving into rehearsals.

"I knew more than I thought I did. How many of us have sobbed over a bottle of white wine to 'Feel My Love' by Adele without realising it was actually written by Bob Dylan? There's a reason Dylan won the Nobel prize for literature. He's a poet."

This particular cast, I am told, is a mixture of both new and old friends, "truly a family."

"Everyone is incredibly gentle with each other, we all check-in before a show but also after. At the end of the night is a great way to process the emotions of the story," he says.

"Our show is so cathartic, the finale is one huge exhale, and we find a huge amount of comfort in experiencing that together. More specifically I am a constant tooth-brusher. The audience may not know I'm minty-fresh, but I sure will."

Blake tells me that he spent a long time trying to mould himself into what he believed the arts industry wanted him to be and wishes that he hadn't.

"My best advice to performers is to learn who you are and build on that as a solid foundation. Just see everything, read everything, treasure the rich history of theatre in Australia and abroad; then take a long, cold, hard, look at yourself. It shouldn't be pretty, but my god it's useful. Invulnerable actors scare the hell out of me. How can you know your character if you don't know who you are?"

What does happiness mean for Blake in 2022?

"I'm just an old showgirl from way back. Doing eight shows a week makes me happy."

Girl from the North Country will show at the Theatre Royal until 19th March, with tickets on sale now.

<https://www.theatroyalsydney.com/events/season-2022/girl-from-the-north-country/>



Seniors Functional Fitness

Improve your current fitness levels, your balance, and your overall health and wellbeing with classes will be run by qualified physiotherapist Sally Castell. The sessions focus around; falls prevention, strength and mobility training, balance and coordination.

Date: February 9th 2022
Time: 3:30 PM to 2:30PM
Where: Gordon Old School, 799 Pacific Highway, Gordon
Cost: \$126 for 9 weeks
rhall@krq.nsw.gov.au

12 Course Dinner AMSA Lunar New Year 2022

A glorious Lunar New Year celebration to mark the year of the Tiger, featuring art, music, performance, food, and traditional cultural celebrations.

Date: 18th February 2022
Time: 6:30 PM to 10:30 PM
Where: King Dynasty, 600/1 Anderson St, Chatswood NSW 2067
Cost: \$88 to \$118 per person
<https://amsa.com.au/event/lunar-new-year-2022/>



Centennial Park Picnic

Now you can pre-order a hamper of exotic cheeses and meats from the Pantry at Centennial Park and then kick back with your feast, surrounded by the calm of the gardens.

Date: Monday through to Sunday
Time: Pre-order minimum 24 hours in advance
Where: Centennial Park
Cost: Hampers start at \$40.00 per person
<https://www.centennialhomestead.com.au/picnics/>

Murdered to Death

Agatha Christie fans will love this play in which a variety of characters are thrown together following the mysterious death of the owner of a country manor house. You will meet the bungling Inspector Pratt, a suspicious French art dealer and his moll, Bunting the butler, an English Colonel and more besides in this laugh out loud theatre production.

Date: Until Saturday 5th March 2022
Time: Various
Where: Genesian Theatre, 420 Kent Street, Sydney, 2000
Cost: \$35.00 to \$30.00
<https://genesian.sales.ticketsearch.com/sales/saleevent/18152>

Aboriginal Bush Tucker Tour

Learn more about Indigenous bush foods and how these foods were used traditionally and how they have been adapted today. On your one-hour tour with your First Nations guide, you'll journey through the Cadi Jam Ora garden and enjoy some treats along the way.

Date: Every Thursday, Friday and Saturday (excluding public holidays), until the end of June 2022.
Time: 11am
Where: The Garden Shop, The Royal Botanic Garden Sydney, Sydney NSW 2000, Australia
Cost: Free- \$30.00
<https://events.humanitix.com/aboriginal-bush-tucker-tour?ga=2.91400024.376394542.1643593771-1769144910.1643084152#>

How to Build a Beehive

A workshop where you will get busy learning the history of the Ku-ring-gai hives and how they have changed over time, plus a demonstration from Ku-ring-gai Council's native bee expert Alexander Austin

Date: 17th February 2022
Time: 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM
Where: Gordon Library
Cost: Free
libraryevents@mnc.nsw.gov.au



The Classic Cupcake CO: Buttercream Flowers Masterclass

Two hours of sugar at a Mosman Bakery! Learn from Master bakers, how to create beautiful flowers using buttercream and a range of piping tip. The workshop includes all materials, recipes and handouts, all sugar craft tools, equipment and your box of cupcakes to take home.

Date: 5th to 26th February 2022
Time: Various
Where: 167, Avenue Road, Mosman, 2088
Cost: \$99.00
<https://whatson.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/events/buttercream-flowers-masterclass>

Night at the Barracks

A night under the stars at the iconic Barracks, North Head will see a selection of talent performing throughout their run. 20 nights of theatre, ballet, dance, rock, opera and jazz.

Date: 24th February 2022 until 27th March 2022
Time: 7:30 PM
Where: North Head, Manly
Cost: \$299 to \$69.00
<https://nightatthebarracks.com.au/>

Kirribilli Markets

This Art, Design & Fashion market includes over 220 stalls, products and delicious food to consume. Explore the Kirribilli Markets which are one of the oldest in Sydney. Find new and recycled fashion and accessories, jewellery, plants and more.



Date: 13th February
Time: 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM
Where: Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre, 16-18 Fitzroy Street, Kirribilli
Cost: Free to attend
<https://www.kirribillimarkets.com/>



Matisse Alive

This free program of art, music, performance and community celebrates Matisse's art as an inspiration for emerging modern artists. Marvel at four new artist projects, that explore Matisse's work and his focus. There is also an electrifying display of tivaevae- the Polynesian art of quilting.

Date: Closes April 3rd 2022
Time: Everyday 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Where: Art Gallery of NSW
Cost: Free

The Green Beauty Edit

Australia's leading green beauty event, The Green Edit, is back! Founded by leading Sydney make-up artist, Cathy Tolpigin, The Green Edit is Australia's go-to destination for the very best in clean, ethical, sustainable and cruelty-free beauty and lifestyle products. Showcasing everything organic and clean from natural makeup to skincare, hair products, fragrance, nail-care and sunscreen, plus lifestyle and inner beauty supplements- this is an event you won't want to miss. Expect to be treated to beauty elixirs and munch on vegan canapés, as you indulge in organic makeup touch ups and learn all about skincare through masterclasses lead by industry professionals.

Date: 10th March 2022
Time: 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM or 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM
Where: Terrace on The Domain in Sydney's CBD.
Cost: \$39.00
www.TheGreenEdit.com.au



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- Diary management and arranging appointments, and site visits.
- Dealings with any issues by correctly escalating and following up with suppliers and clients.
- Responding to customers email, text and phone enquiries.

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- Friendly approachable and passionate about delivering excellent customer service.
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- Highly organised, being both proactive and reactive.
- Ability to work well under pressure.
- Excellent time management and the ability to problem solve.
- Ability to work autonomously.
- Detail oriented multi-tasker.
- Advanced computer skills and the ability to learn new software.
- Intermediate to advanced excel.
- Experience with Mac a plus.

Experience in the kitchen industry would be well regarded but is not essential. We are looking for someone who excels at administration, organisation, communication and is extremely computer literate. This is a Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm position.



Info@SensationalKitchens.com.au
 987 Pacific Hwy, Pymble, NSW, 2273
www.SensationalKitchens.com.au
 02 9196 8812

How Energy Works

James was an accountant that had his own small business. No matter how hard he worked and tried to move ahead, he never seemed to get anywhere. Over time he became very disheartened.

His beautiful wife, who loved him very much, had an avid interest in feng shui and alternative therapies. She read an article I had written in a magazine about the power of positive energy and was interested to see if I could help her husband in his work as he was becoming more and more depressed and disheartened. According to the wife, no matter how hard her husband worked, he never seemed to get ahead. It was like he was just plodding along.

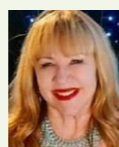
Upon my arrival at their home, I noticed that the family lived in a cul-de-sac which is never a good thing in feng shui. I gave them a few tips and remedies. I told her to place a small Bagua mirror (it's the same shape as the Bagua map but has a mirror) at the front of the home to stop any toxic interfering energy coming in and also, to hang a metal wind chime at the front of the home. The other thing I noticed which stood out like a sore thumb, was that her husband was a hoarder. There was so much clutter everywhere! It was in every nook and cranny of the house and in a shed at the back of the property. When I pointed this out, the woman acknowledged this and said she had been on his back for ages but would now take action herself and get rid of everything while he was at work, with the help of their children. The clutter was everywhere. It was piled up in mountains of junk, felt very unpleasant, and should have been discarded years before as there was hardly any room to walk around. It must have been unpleasant for everyone living in the house.

After I finished at their home, I was then asked to go to James's office, as both he and his wife were happy with my report. On arrival, I noticed that he worked with his back to the main entrance of his small office. Also, I could see how untidy and disorganised his office was with papers and important files everywhere. This was certainly very discouraging, and I could not help but wonder how he managed to work efficiently or was even able to think, with so much clutter



and mess everywhere. There was also poor ventilation in his office. I felt as if I could hardly breathe it was so stuffy, so I suggested to James that perhaps he should open a window sometimes to allow in the fresh air. He agreed. He said that he suffered from allergies most of this life and always had a cold, so he thought it was better to keep the window closed, which was not good for him in the long term. When I told his wife this, she laughed and agreed with everything I said. She told me that she disliked going to his office to visit him because it was always too stuffy and gave her a headache.

A couple of months later, I heard from the family, and they told me that after listening to my practical advice, everything had changed for the better.



Kerrie Erwin is a Psychic and Medium. Get in touch with Kerrie via www.pureview.com.au or kerriejean888@gmail.com. Or you can purchase her book Sacred Space, Find Harmony with Feng Shui.

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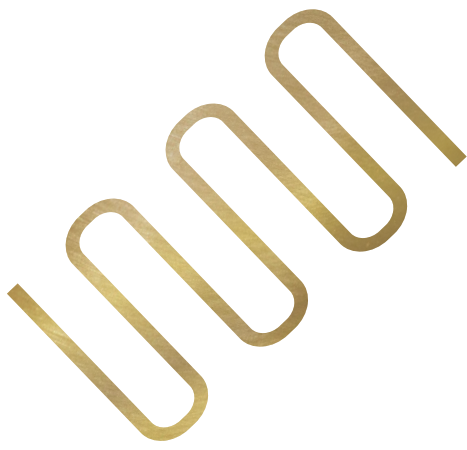
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