

Sydney Observer

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Niav Owens

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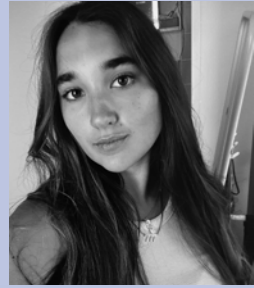
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From the Editor

Greetings fellow *Sydney Observers*! Before we settle into this month's issue, I'd like to introduce myself. My name is Willow, your new Editor, and I can't wait to share our monthly adventures with you all.

For our June issue, we caught up with the wonderful Niv Owens. Niv's trailblazing career in the sports media industry is nothing short of inspiring. She spoke to us about her own journey, as well as her passions in advocating for women in sport. Niv's career is only continuing to bloom with her current position at 10's Paramount sport and the incoming A-League Men's Grand Final and Women's FIFA World Cup.

With the cold season well and truly upon us, this issue takes a deep dive into winter. Delve into warming curries and soup, and perhaps you'll find a new favourite wine along the way. Or, explore the local side of life with the upcoming Gai-mariagal festival. *Sydney Observer* has also looked at the best ways to curate your home for the upcoming cold months.

So, sit back, relax and read!

Willow Berry

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Celebrating Those Who Serve Our Community

On Saturday, May 27, the local emergency services hub in Ku-ring-gai celebrated their 10 year milestone, honouring the feats of NSW SES and NSW RFS volunteers from the past decade.

Our local volunteers have worked out of the shared SES and RFS facility at North Wahroonga since its inception in 2013. The facility has aided the workers in keeping the community safe through vehicle garaging, training, maintenance and running operations.



From an SES perspective, the Ku-ring-gai unit has responded to 8,500 requests for assistance since 2015. During this time, members have served 34,000 hours to the community. Over the last 10 years more than 360 members have been part of the unit.

The event saw high spirits from SES and RFS commanders, as well as many volunteers who had served their local community during flood, storm and fire emergencies.



Sydney Performs in New Ranking

On 19 May, brand evaluation consultancy, Brand Finance, presented their inaugural City Index. Our very own Sydney ranked 1st for best city to live and was also named the 5th best global city.

The ranking is based on a global survey of close to 15,000 members of the public. It was conducted in April 2023 in 20 countries on all continents to measure perceptions of the world's top 100 cities.

The Index has placed London as the best city brand in the world, followed by New York and Paris. Back in Australia, Melbourne was ranked at 16th and Perth came in at 52nd.

View the full Brand Finance City Index 2023 at <https://brandfinance.com>.



How Much is 'Buy Now Pay Later' Really Costing Us?

According to a new survey, an alarming number of Aussies have revealed that they don't know the risks that come with using 'buy now pay later' (BNPL) services.

Australian consumers are increasingly embracing 'buy now pay later', in the past two years alone service providers have seen a 4.5 per cent increase in revenue. With more than 158,000 Australian businesses accepting BNPL payments, new research is suggesting respective consumers need to be more receptive.

The survey of over 1000 Australians found that:

- 59% of respondents have used a BNPL service;
- 47% of consumers wrongly believe BNPL providers are bound by the same consumer protection laws as banks;
- 38% incorrectly believe missing a BNPL payment will not affect their credit score;
- 24% think BNPL is not a form of credit.

The risks of debt is increased by the ill-awareness of consumers. Additionally, the data found that those most at risk are younger consumers with three-quarters of 18-to-30-year-olds admitting to using at least one provider to make a purchase.

These findings are particularly timely, following Financial Services Minister Stephen Jones' announcement on behalf of the Albanese government.

Changes to the law will see that 'buy now pay later' products are regulated as credit products. Which, following the results of the survey, appears to be a necessary intervention to help protect Aussies from spiralling into debt.

The full survey results including state and age breakdown can be found at www.money.com.au.

Explore the 'Pasifika' Culture

Arts & Cultural Exchange has launched Treasure Islands, a six-part web series produced in a collaboration with the Powerhouse, exploring 'Pasifika' culture and heritage from the islands of Samoa, Fiji, Cook Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tonga and Kiribati.

Lalau Leo Tanoi will lead discussion with on-island and Australian-born guests of Pacific Island heritage. "Treasure Islands shines a bright light on the Powerhouse's Pasifika collection and ignites powerful conversations that celebrate and honour the rich culture and heritage of these communities," he said.

Each episode is between 15-20 minutes and will explore cultural belongings including drums, baskets, tivaevae, pottery, symbolic gifts, dancing skirts and other attire from the Powerhouse Pasifika collection. "We can inspire a deeper understanding and appreciation of this vibrant and diverse culture that shapes the next generation of knowledge holders," added Tanoi.

TREASURE ISLANDS EPISODE WATCH DATES:

- Episode 1: Samoa - Wednesday, 17 May
- Episode 2: Fiji - Wednesday, 24 May
- Episode 3: Cook Islands - Wednesday, 31 May
- Episode 4: Papua New Guinea, 7 June
- Episode 5: Tonga - Wednesday, 14 June
- Episode 6: Kiribati - Wednesday, 21 June

Watch every episode of Treasure Islands on the Arts & Cultural Exchange website at: www.aceinc.org.au.

Netflix Cracks Down on Password Sharing

Last month Netflix announced an update on its sharing policy in Australia, the change came after survey data indicated approximately half of Australia's Netflix users were sharing their profile with someone outside of their household.

The streaming platform has been known for its generous password sharing policy, but those days seem to be coming to an end. A password clampdown was first flagged in April 2022 and by February new terms were rolled out to users in New Zealand, Portugal, Canada and Spain.

As of May, Netflix has introduced a fee of \$7.99 per month for those who wish to share with someone outside of their household.

Streaming expert at Finder, Mark Neilsen has commented on the reality of this new expense; "On Netflix's Standard plan, you will be paying a minimum of \$24.98 a month if you share your password with just one person outside your household. This makes it one of the most expensive monthly fees for a streaming service."

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netzero.krg.nsw.gov.au





New Net Zero campaign for Ku-ring-gai

Ku-ring-gai Council has launched a new website that'll coincide with rebates and workshops in an effort to reach the goal of zero emissions by the year 2040.

The new website is full of practical steps aimed at renters, homeowners, young families, retired couples and those in apartments.

Steps include installing energy efficient heating and cooling, tips on buying electric cars and bikes, how to replace old appliances with electric options or installing solar panels and batteries.

The Council is adopting a proactive approach towards electrifying local

homes, reducing waste and offering free home assessments and rebates for a range of items.

Through the Net Zero website residents will be encouraged to gradually convert appliances and transport to renewable electric power.

According to the Council's Net Zero action plan, converting appliances, heating, air conditioning, and transport to all electric is cheaper, healthier and better for the environment.

Find out more about the Net Zero program and watch local residents talk about their experiences at www.netzero.krg.nsw.gov.au.

Local School Students Turn Trash into Tools in West Pymble

In a new effort to minimise waste, West Pymble Public students have transformed plastics into rulers for their classmates.

It follows a workshop where Year 3 and 4 students were shown how plastic waste could be changed into school rulers.

Ku-ring-gai Council has partnered with the industrial design company Defy Design to purchase a special mould whereby plastics collected by students can be melted down into rulers for the classroom.

Attending the workshop was Mayor Jeff Pettett, who said he would like to see the innovation being taken up by more local schools.

"It's a great way of transforming unusable plastic into something useful and also educating the students on what a circular economy really means."

The Mayor added that Council was keen to hear from other local schools who might be interested in using the mould and hosting a free workshop at their school.



West Pymble PS Principal Bronwyn Wilson said the students were keen to see how the plastic could be turned into rulers. "They will be proudly using them in class."

Find out more a www.netzero.krg.nsw.gov.au.

Fire Safety Comes First in Public Exhibition

Managing the risk of bushfires is at the forefront of Ku-ring-gai and Hornsby councils' new public exhibition which is now running until 30 June.

The plan has been prepared by the Rural Fire Service in consultation with respective local Councils and other stakeholders.

It's never too early to start bushfire prevention – this proposed draft plan maps the level of bushfire risk across Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai over the next five years, and includes appropriate actions needed to minimise and manage the risks.

It identifies which agencies are involved in managing bushfire incidents and what homeowners can do to prepare their family and property.

Hazard reduction is just one way of preparing for bushfires. There are a number of different types of hazard reduction from education to structural planning - none of which can completely remove the threat of fire, but they definitely lessen risks and may add peace of mind.

The plan is on public exhibition until Friday 30 June. Residents can complete a short survey on the plan or send their comments to the Rural Fire Service by the closing date.

Mayor Jeff Pettett said the new plan included detailed actions on minimising bushfire risk, such as creating firebreaks and targeted hazard reduction burns.

"It's important that people living in bushfire prone areas are prepared and know what to do in the event of an emergency."

"The RFS website is a great resource to help you put together a plan."

For more information and other important details visit www.krg.nsw.gov.au.

Are You Facing Will Woes?

Wal Abramowicz

Solicitors acting for executors in obtaining probate of a will and administering an estate often hear from people who believed that they were going to receive a gift or fund under the will only to find they are not mentioned.

This arises from the common practice of will makers where, before they die, they often promise to leave something for a friend or relative in the will but then do not do it.

There are some circumstances where a court will uphold these types of promises, but the circumstances must be right.

A recent case involved a man and his ex wife. They separated and divorced. They negotiated their own property settlement without the advice of lawyers. The agreed property settlement was that they would each keep the assets that they held in their own separate names except that the man would pay his ex wife \$50,000.00 and he promised to leave her a particular property in his will. The man told his ex wife on a number of occasions that she would receive the house through his will when he died.



But before he died he made a new will leaving her nothing. After the man died the ex wife sued on the promise and won.

This case had some very special circumstances and the woman had the necessary evidence. She was able to show that she relied on the promise that she would receive the property. As a result of the promise she elected not to get court orders for the property settlement when they got divorced. It is not enough that a will maker stated an intention to make a particular gift and the intended beneficiary rely on that. The promise has to actually encourage the intended beneficiary to

make a decision to their detriment in reliance on the promise.

The key ingredient will always be admissible evidence. If you feel you should have received a gift in a will you should seek legal advice within the relevant time limits.

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*Parking available at the Gordon Centre and Ku-ring-gai Council on Dumaresq Street.

Australian Olympic Change-Maker Search Launches for 2023

Willow Berry

Do you know a friend or student who has the Olympic spirit? The Australian Olympic Committee has launched the 2023 Australian Olympic Change-Maker program with nominations now open to high schools across the nation.

The Change-Maker program recognises secondary students from around the country who demonstrate the Olympic values both on and off the field of play, through leadership and driving positive change in their school and local communities.

The program's mission is to shine a light on young individuals from all over the country who are inspired to "power the change". This brilliant opportunity allows students to share ideas and connect with other like-minded young leaders at the Change-Maker Forum.

Change-Makers will also get the opportunity to collaborate and learn from Australian Olympic athletes. A panel of Olympians will then select students from around the country to attend the National Olympic Change-Maker Summit at the end of the year.



Tokyo 2020 Olympic Athletes at Sports Craft uniform launch.

A panel of Olympians will select students from around the country to attend the National Olympic Change-Maker Summit at the end of the year.

As a 2020 Australian Olympic Change-Maker myself, the opportunities that this program opened up to me have been life changing. Even though my term was during the pandemic, and thus online, learning from like minded and inspired peers from around the country was extremely empowering.

Once you're a Change-Maker you'll always be a part of the Olympic family. After 2020 the Olympic Committee took me under their wing as an intern and with them I worked during Tokyo 2020 and Beijing 2022. Now, a year down the line, I don't think I'd be here writing in this magazine without their undivided support.

To possess the Olympic Spirit you do not have to be an athletic overachiever or confident leader, nominees should be empowering, nurturing and inspired. Put simply, individuals that influence positive

change are those who strive to help others reach their best.

AOC CEO Matt Carroll is proud to see the program enter its fifth year. "As we continue down the green and gold runway towards Brisbane 2032, it is important we continue to champion the young Australians driving positive change.

"Our Change-Makers from previous years are already making a difference in their communities and indeed in the Olympic movement – six 2022 Change-Makers participated and gave a youth voice to the Brisbane 2032 Legacy Forum in March this year."

"I look forward to learning more about each of the nominated 2023 Change-Makers and hearing the student's ideas, insights and recommendations at the Change-Maker Forum and National Summit later in the year. It is one of the best days in my job,



Our editor, Willow Berry, during her internship, in 2020.

hearing ideas from young Australians that will make a positive difference to Australia," he added.

High schools around Australia are invited to nominate 2 students from across years 10-12 who are demonstrating positive change in their communities.

Schools can find out more and nominate students at www.aochangemaker.com.au.

Ku-ring-gai's Indigenous Culture in Full Bloom

The Gai-mariagal Festival is upon us with music and art, children's stories and guided walks at the ready. Founded in 2001, the festival aims to raise awareness of First Nations people living in the northern Sydney region.

The festival started on 26 May and will conclude at the end of NAIDOC Week on 9 July, but in the meantime things are kicking off in Ku-ring-gai. Indigenous artist, Jude Jarrett will run a dot painting workshop at the Ku-ring-gai Art Centre in Roseville on 7 June.

A guided bushwalk with Karen Smith from the Aboriginal Heritage Office discussing the Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden's indigenous heritage is also on offer on 8 June.

Sink your teeth into 17 June as the Mudgee-based Indigiearth catering company presents a bushfoods and botanicals tasting experience alongside owner and Ngemba Weilwan woman, Sharon Winsor.



gai-mariagal-festival.com.au

At St Ives youth hub on 22 June Gai-mariagal Festival leaders Aunty Susan & Aunty Caroline will host a fun art and craft session for young people aged 12-18, along with free pizza. The youth hub is located next to St Ives library.

One of this year's Festival highlights is on 24 June, with a collaboration between First Nations & South Asian artists. The sounds of the Indian stringed instrument called the veena will be intertwined with stories from Sri Lanka, Wiradjuri ways and Aboriginal dance. The Bhoomi experience will take place at St Ives Showground between 3pm and 4.30pm on the day.

Festival creator and co-chair Susan Moylan-Coombes said the event was "about creating opportunities for people to come together to learn about country, meet new people and build new relationships".

"It's so exciting to see the range of events that Council is offering for this year's Festival," she added.

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- Wed 7th June 7:00pm
- Friday 9th June 7:00pm
- Saturday 10th June 2:00pm & 6:00pm
- Sunday 11th June 11:00am & 2:00pm
- Monday 12th June 2:00pm
- Wednesday 14th June 7:00pm
- Friday 16th June 7:00pm
- Saturday 17th June 2:00pm & 6:00pm
- Sunday 18th June 11:00am & 2:00pm
- Friday 23rd June 7:00pm
- Saturday 24th June 2:00pm & 6:00pm
- Sunday 25th June 11:00am & 2:00pm

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Friday 30th June to Sunday 16th July

- Friday 30th June 7:00pm
- Saturday 1st July 1:00pm & 4:00pm
- Sunday 2nd July 11:00am & 2:00pm
- Tuesday 4th July 11:00am
- Wed 5th July 11:00am & 2:00pm
- Thursday 6th July 11:00am
- Friday 7th July 7:00pm
- Saturday 8th July 1:00pm & 4:00pm
- Sunday 9th July 11:00am & 2:00pm
- Tuesday 11th July 11:00am
- Wed 12th July 11:00am & 2:00pm
- Thursday 13th July 11:00am
- Friday 14th July 7:00pm
- Saturday 15th July 1:00pm & 4:00pm
- Sunday 16th July 11:00am Only.



Is Sydney's Economic Boon Upon Us?

Sydney's latest economic analysis is good news for businesses and residents with results showing an increase in local spending and the number of visitors.

The City of Sydney's economic analysis of the first quarter of 2023 has shown the city is closer to pre-pandemic levels across several indicators.

The analysis pulled from various sources and collaboration with stakeholders and government bodies, shows Sydney's local economy steadily improving.

The analysis has found that local spending has recovered up to 98% of pre-pandemic levels (after adjusting for inflation). Fridays are the highest spending day, with an average of \$28 million each week (87% of pre-pandemic levels).

The monthly local spend in central Sydney in March 2023 was \$704 million, which has risen from \$617 million in March 2022. Public transport use to central Sydney has grown strongly in the last year, now sitting at 84% of pre-pandemic levels.

From July 2022 - February 2023 \$3.1 billion went into approved building developments. After adjusting for inflation, the city's night-time economy (6pm-6am) has recovered to 97% of the 2019 pre-pandemic level.

Sydney had 247,000 international visitor arrivals in February - a 16% increase from

The monthly local spend in central Sydney in March 2023 was \$704 million, which has risen from \$617 million in March 2022.

the year before. The education sector also saw a 74% increase in International students since 2019 levels. Sydney's international student population continues to exceed the national average, increasing 6% from November 2021 to November 2022.

The snapshot shows the impact of the pandemic and the significant change in working trends. Lord Mayor of Sydney, Clover Moore has acknowledged how Sydney is acting on these changes.

"Each quarter we're pulling together a snapshot across a range of datasets relating to visitors, consumer spend, people movement, and the overall economic performance of our city,"

"We are constantly talking with stakeholders to understand what is happening on the ground for their business and community, and this will give us a strong evidence base of what changes are occurring in our area.

"In turn, it will help us better understand how people connect with the city, provide valuable insights to businesses and community, and guide our strategies."

With flexible working on the rise, the data suggests there is a shift in how the city is used. Regular weekday commuters have dropped and there's an increasing number of visitors using the city for a variety of experiences.

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday are the strongest days for public transport, reflecting the popularity of working from home on Mondays and Fridays. Weekends on public transport into the city are now busier for visitors than before the pandemic.

Sydney's night-time economy is increasing well with total night-time spend in March sitting at \$355 million. Total night-time spend represented almost a third of all local spend in a 24-hour period. Saturday night spend is up 15% on pre-pandemic levels and Sunday nights are up 14%.

The City of Sydney is proposing to spend \$750 million in the next financial year, with the Budget now on Exhibition.

Funds will be spent on supporting local businesses, building capital works projects, maintaining community facilities and parks, producing precinct activations like the Sydney Streets program, and boosting visitor services to target international students and visitors.

Community Organisation Hosts Refugee Forum

Voices of Bradfield, a community organisation on Sydney's Upper North Shore, are hosting a Refugee Forum to highlight the ongoing plight of refugees held in Australian immigration detention.

Following the model established in the seat of Indi and replicated successfully across several seats in Australia to deliver a growing federal cross-bench of community backed independents, Voices of Bradfield are responding to a growing call to have the views of the Bradfield federal electorate fully represented in parliament.

President of the group, Dr Helen Cannon, said, "the plight of refugees in Australian immigration detention presented as one of the top three issues of concern to our Members in our annual survey, and the people of Bradfield don't feel that their concerns are being taken seriously by the existing political parties in this regard".

The Refugee Forum will be held from 2-4pm on Sunday 18 June at the Roseville Uniting Church Hall at 7A Lord St Roseville and will feature guest speaker Alison Battisson, Founder and Director Principal of Human Rights for All (HR4A).

HR4A is an Australian charitable human rights law firm which provides pro bono representation to refugees and stateless people in Australia's immigration detention prisons. HR4A focuses on long term detained and complex-case refugees and stateless people to test the principles of liberty in Australia. Ms Battisson was awarded as the Human Rights Lawyer of the Year in Lawyer Monthly magazine's International Legal Awards 2022.



Founder and Director Principal of Human Rights for All, Alison Battisson.

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Boats, Beware of Whales

In recent weeks multiple pods of humpbacks have been spotted off the coast from the Royal National Park to Seal Rocks. Boaters on the Sydney and Hunter Coasts are being advised not to get too close to whales as they make their annual trip north to warmer waters.

Marine Rescue NSW Commissioner Alex Barrell said boaters need to be aware of marine mammals.

“As we are starting to see the whale migration along the NSW Coast, Marine Rescue is reminding boaters that there are rules and restrictions in place for the wellbeing of the animal but also the safety of boaters.”

Boaters are prohibited to come within 100 metres of a whale or 300 metres of a whale and a calf. “If a whale does surface near your vessel it is important that you cut your motors and slow down to a safe speed,” Commissioner Barrell added.

Skippers are also being reminded not to approach whales from behind or to wait in front of their path.

The Marine Rescue NSW Commissioner said no more than three vessels at a time



should approach whales and skippers should wait their turn.

“There will be plenty of time to enjoy these magnificent creatures during the migration season.

“As always if you are heading out on the water to view the whales please make sure that you Log On and Log Off with your local Marine Rescue base either via the Marine

Rescue app or over VHF marine radio Channel 16,” Commissioner Barrell said.

Marine Rescue NSW is a volunteer based not-for-profit professional organisation dedicated to keeping boaters safe on the water and supporting local communities.

For more information, please call Travis Winks MRNSW Media and Publications Manager on 0419 126 891.

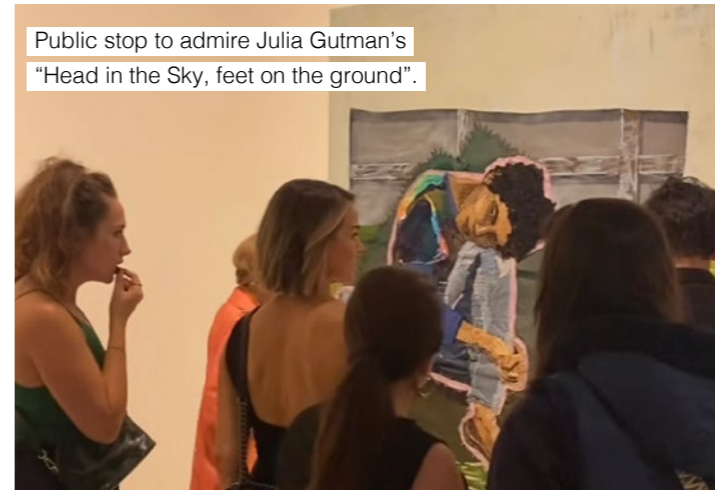
Archibald Prize Reveal Winners

Willow Berry

Australia’s most prestigious art prize proved its century old supremacy with its 2023 Archibald, Wynne and Sulman instalments.

The Archibald Prize for portrait painting, with a prize fund of \$100,000, was won by Sydney based artist Julia Gutman. Among 949 entries, and then 56 other finalists, 29-year-old Gutman became one of the youngest winners in the Prizes 102-year-history. For the first time ever, there were more works by women (30) then there were men (27).

Gutman’s winning portrait called ‘Head in the sky, feet on the ground’, depicted Australian singer-songwriter, Montaigne. The portrait perfectly juxtaposes the quiet of Montaigne’s intimate reflection upon a canvas that’s loudly collaged using oil paints, found textures and embroidery. Gutman, who is good friends with Montaigne, expressed how the two of them share the desire to break tradition in their work – that



Public stop to admire Julia Gutman’s “Head in the Sky, feet on the ground”.

notion has been beautifully translated in Gutman’s winning Archibald piece.

The Wynne Prize is awarded to the best landscape painting of Australian scenery, or figure sculpture. This year it saw 41 selected finalists from its 726 entries. The winning piece was by first-time Wynne Prize finalist Zaachariaha Fielding.

In the piece, Fielding has used acrylics on linen to reflect the sounds of Mimili, a small community in the eastern part

of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands. ‘Inma’ lays Pitjantjatjara conversations upon a canvas for a beautiful ode to country.

The Sulman Prize is given to the best subject painting, genre painting or mural project in oil, acrylic, watercolour or mixed media. This year the prize saw a record breaking 673 entries. Out of the 45 finalists, 15 artists were of Australian Indigenous descent – the highest ever number for the prize.

81-year-old Doris Bush Nungarrayi took out the top spot with her piece ‘Mamunya ngalyananyi’ (Monster coming). In her acrylic on linen piece, Nungarrayi depicts several Mamus, or ‘cheeky ones’, as she refers to them. The image vividly brings forth the simultaneous cheek and fear of the Mamus beings.

The exhibition for the Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prizes and finalists is up and running until 3 September at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. For more information visit www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au.

RSPCA Rallies Behind ‘Pocket Pets’

When many potential pet-parents start their search for a furry friend, most people think their options are restricted to cats and dogs. But ‘pocket pets’ such as ferrets, guinea pigs, rabbits, rats, and mice make ideal companions for people in smaller dwellings, or those without a yard.

Pocket pets may be small, but they are just as loving as their larger counterparts. Bec Bochtler, Head of Operations at RSPCA NSW, encourages prospective pet owners to give smaller animals some consideration.

“Though often overlooked, pocket pets can be wonderful companions too. They may be tiny, but they come with huge hearts, and can make for excellent pets for people living in smaller accommodation.” she says.

Over the last few weeks, select animals from our shelters have had their adoption fees reduced, in an effort to help them find the loving homes they deserve. So far, 401 animals have been united with their forever families,



but there are still plenty of pint-sized animals patiently waiting to find a home.

“If you feel as though your lifestyle is suited to a pocket-sized companion, please consider adopting a smaller pet from RSPCA

NSW. There are so many little personalities waiting to meet you.” Bochtler adds.

Those wishing to find out more about how to care for pocket pets can visit the RSPCA NSW website (www.rspcansw.org.au).

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Finding Purpose in Painting with Zahrina Robertson

Willow Berry

North Sydney based artist, Zahrina Robertson, was born with an eye for the arts. After losing her mojo during the Pandemic, she fell into painting and found a new love for meditative landscapes. Success was only inevitable and now Zahrina's talents are taking the world by storm.

Zahrina's obsession with colour, light and nature has been forever instilled and it spurred on her early career in photography. As a multi award winning photographer, videographer and author, her career saw her capture the likes of Arnold Schwarzenegger, Richard Branson, Simon Sinek, Tony Shieh, Aviva Drescher and Carla Zampatti. But, even in the glory of her success, Zahrina's soul was crying out for much more.

"I remember waking up feeling drained, unmotivated, and uninspired. It was as if my inner light had been snuffed out, and I was just going through the motions in the dark. My energy levels were at an all-time low, and I just couldn't seem to shake off the feeling that I lacked purpose." She says.

"I was so embarrassed that I didn't turn to anyone for help, and instead, I went inward, which only made matters worse. I was in a deep state of loss and didn't know how to climb out of it."

"One day, when I was accidentally scrolling on YouTube, I stumbled upon a video of a painter talking about colours. I had never painted in my life, but something about the colours drew me in - instantly, like a magnet force! Suddenly, I felt a very powerful physical reaction, like a jolt! It was as if my body was telling me that this was it, that I had found what I had been searching for."

With that spur of inspiration, Zahrina picked up a brush and some paint and started painting. She felt alive and free



and started to share her paintings on social media. Zahrina was discovered by the New York Art Gallery on Instagram, and her art was soon featured in the gallery for an Emerging Artist exhibition.

Her art collection, Meditative Lightscapes, is a place where light and nature melt into each other and colourful meditative paintings emerge from deep within her soul to tell a story. Zahrina extracts the story and beauty from nature and light and blends it into meditative oil paintings.

Zahrina continues to meet success, she's now creating curated premium and exclusive pieces, with clients such as Tony Robbins. Within the past year she's opened a gallery, and made a number of media appearances, but most importantly she's found happiness doing what she loves.

"Losing my mojo was one of the toughest times of my life, but it led me to discover a part of myself that I never knew existed - courage to believe in myself. Do not lose faith in knowing that intuition can deliver all you need."

"I now understand that sometimes, when we feel lost, it's the universe nudging us in a different direction, guiding us to where we are meant to be. So, if you're feeling like you've lost your mojo, don't despair, life is short and needs to be lived, take small steps, it's game on, time to amplify you. Take a step back, listen to your intuition, and be open to new experiences. You never know where your next life's adventure may lead you..."

For more information and to view Zahrina's Meditative Lightscapes, please go to <https://zahrinagallery.com> or follow her on Instagram @zahrinaartist.

"I now understand that sometimes, when we feel lost, it's the universe nudging us in a different direction, guiding us to where we are meant to be."

Painter, Zahrina Robertson

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NIAV OWENS DO IT YOUR WAY

Willow Berry



She's a superstar in her own right, not only has Nia Owens covered some of the biggest sporting events on the planet, but she's been paving the way for young women looking to make their mark both on and off the sporting field. Ahead of her involvement at the Isuzu UTE A-League Grand Final, and the FIFA Women's World Cup, we couldn't miss the chance to catch up.

Childhood gifts us the ability to dream without limits. That inner power to state what we want and never give up on is something Nia Owens has never let go of. Nia had an idyllic country kid upbringing, coming from a tiny little town in the Hunter Valley called Hinton, that would only ever make the news when it flooded.

"I think I got to romanticise my future back then. My upbringing was freeing. I've got two brothers and we all grew up loving sport and being outside playing a whole heap of different sports as much as possible. My dad as well, he's mad for sport," she says.

Nia's passion for sport is what ultimately sparked her interest to go into sports broadcasting. But, seeing is believing, and there were some strong female voices who made a big difference in her life.

"The likes of Simone Thurtell, Tracey Holmes and Debbie Spillane, these amazing women were on ABC grandstand and you didn't see a lot of women in sports media. So from a watching and listening perspective they had a really big impact on my future."



Nia at the stadium.

In her position now, and as a mum to her daughter Cara, Nia is passionate about advocating for women in sport.

"For me as a young girl it was so nice to hear females, you feel included – like you're part of it. For my little girl now growing up, she knows female athletes, she watches them in stadiums, she sees them on television, and when you ask her what sporting stars she loves watching, she has female names for you.

"I think her generation is coming up in such a different environment, that is still changing and progress is still needed, but it's on that positive trajectory. That's such an exciting thing to see and be part of, especially heading into the World Cup this year in Australia."

Nia's decorated career has seen her host Euro 2020 for Optus Sport and National Grandstand on ABC Radio. She's reported live from around the World at numerous Olympic and Paralympic Games, as well as rugby, cricket and football World Cups.

In her current position at 10/Paramount sport, Nia continues to kick goals, especially ahead of the Isuzu UTE A-League Men's Grand Final and FIFA Women's World Cup.

"We're going to have this blockbuster A-League Grand final between the Central Coast Mariners who hadn't been there for a decade. They're the youngest side in the league and have heaps of local juniors from the coast. They're up against this juggernaut, powerhouse in Melbourne city, who are in their fourth straight Grand Final and who have a bazillion Socceroos in their team. Both teams play this really exciting brand of football, it's going to be really special to witness."

"After that I'm so excited about the fact that we're hosting the Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand. I think for young Aussie boys and girls to see the best female footballers on the planet, here in front of full stadiums being celebrated for the skill and excitement that they will bring. I think that will be a life changing experience for so many young people."

In just under a month, Nia will also be taking part in the Big Three trek to raise money for The Mark Hughes Foundation and



Nia and Grace Gill at the 2023 Semi Final 2nd Leg.

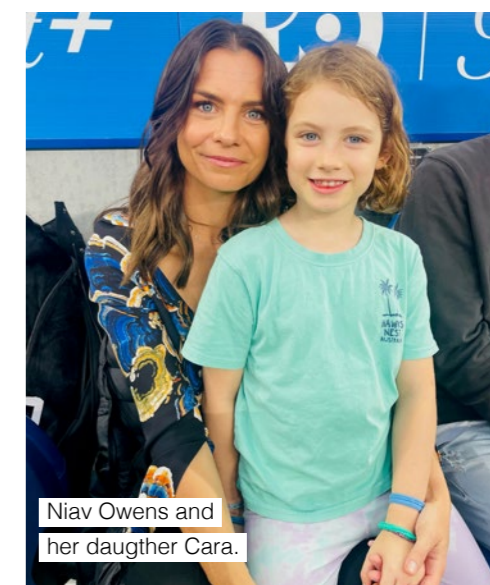
Brain Cancer research, alongside Network 10's Tristan McManus. "It's such a positive trek to be involved in. People can donate to the fundraiser, a huge amount of money has been raised over the last few years from the big three trek. It is such an incredible and special experience."

Lastly, *Sydney Observer* asked Nia what advice she had for young girls and boys looking at a career in sport.

"My advice is, do more of what makes you happy. And do it your way. So lean into what makes you special. And what floats your boat. Do a whole heap of that, and enjoy doing it. really lean into what makes you special and different."

"For my little girl, now growing up, she knows female athletes, she watches them in stadiums, she sees them on television, and when you ask her what sporting stars she loves watching, she has female names for you."

Sports Presenter, NIA OWENS



Nia Owens and her daughter Cara.



What Does ChatGPT Mean for You and Me?

Willow Berry

If you're like me, one day the term ChatGPT stormed into your life out of nowhere and it doesn't appear to be leaving anytime soon. AI and its impacts on society has been a huge topic in modern discussions - from word of mouth to dystopian films and literature, we've all been privy to it.

So, what exactly is ChatGPT? It's an artificial intelligence powered chatbot of sorts that anyone can access via the internet. By simply stating a term, or writing a question in the 'search' bar, ChatGPT will then generate highly cohesive, human-like responses.

To that you may wonder what exactly is the issue? On one hand we can receive instantaneous knowledge that's been filtered through multiple sources and formatted succinctly. The flip side of this is that in education there is the potential for it to be used for writing assignments or for plagiarism.

ChatGPT is an artificial intelligence powered chatbot of sorts that anyone can access via the internet.

When educators set tasks for students they are looking for them to interpret information through their own personal analysis. If students are solely using ChatGPT they're not participating in active learning, thus skipping over the important skills one learns when researching.

Since its launch in November 2022, ChatGPT has been banned in Western Australia, New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmanian public schools. There's definitely pros and cons for ChatGPT, but when it comes to schools and universities, regulations and boundaries are necessary to protect academic and educational integrity.

Seasons of Learning at School

Russell Bailey

Holidays are great. Perhaps you're looking forward to skiing or travelling in the winter break. Holidays are important seasons for every school child - as are the seasons for focussing on studies.

The Floriade festival in Canberra each year is a wonderful celebration of Spring with seasonal flowers gloriously arrayed in open gardens. This must give great satisfaction for those who prepare diligently for this season. Likewise, preparation for exams and assessments, sports and performances - preparing for the seasons of learning each Term at school - gives great satisfaction to students as they work hard to achieve their best possible results.

But a home garden will look drab for most of the year if it only has seasonal flowers. In addition to the seasonal flowers, a garden that's going to look beautiful all year round needs some perennial plants - plants that bloom and continue to give colour regardless of the season.

In addition to preparing for peak performance in particular skills at particular seasons of the year, there are also



perennial flowers that need to be growing in students' lives all the time. Here's a list of perennials that will contribute to making life always worthwhile: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. In the Bible these are described as fruits of the Holy Spirit. They're etched into stone in the Library where I teach, a perennial reminder that this is the outcome we are working towards for all of our students.

On ANZAC Day, I travelled to Hellfire Pass in Thailand to lay a wreath for a Burnside orphan - Douglas Simpson, memorialised in a garden outside our School Hall - who, along with many other Australian soldiers,

sacrificed his life on the Burma-Thai railway as he was defending the freedoms that we all enjoy in Australia today. We'd rather there was no war. We'd rather not lose any of our school student generation to war in the future. But wouldn't it be good if our students lost themselves in doing good for others, helping others who are in need, blessing the lives of their families and neighbours with faithful love and kindness.



Russell Bailey,
Headmaster of Redeemer Baptist School.



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Book Brings Fun Back into Literacy

National Library of Australia publishing has teamed up with Kathy Weeden and Kim Drane for a new learn to read book that's bringing the fun back into literacy. The book, titled *Phonobet*, takes on an onomatopoeic romp through the sounds of Australian English.

'I'm sure you've met the Alphabet, our very tidy friend, with A at the beginning, and Z right at the end. Now come and meet the Phonobet, a very handy twin: a set of all the sounds you use when wagging your chin.'

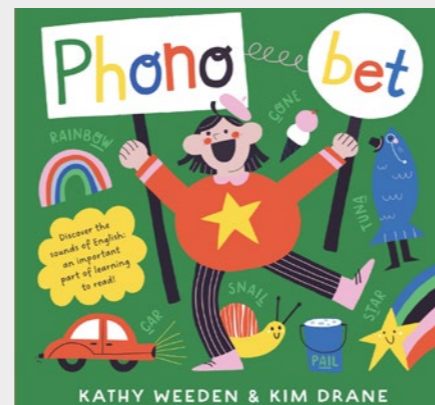
Phonobet

In what's been described as a very Dr. Seuss like reading, this clever rhyming text helps readers understand sounds and literacy - and it's full of buzzing bees, whirring robots, grunting monkeys and more!

Aligning with primary-school literacy programs, this book can be used by educators and read aloud by parents of 4- to 6-year-olds alike. Kim Drane's bold, colourful and fun-filled illustrations pop on the page.

Author, Kathy Weeden, has extensive classroom experience as a music and learning support teacher, and has provided additional learning resources at the end of the book. These include fun activities and a brief, accessible explanation of the phonemes of Australian English aimed at teachers and parents.

Phonobet will be released in June 2023.





Kids in Online Environments

New research from Edith Cowan University (ECU) has shed light on child exploitation concerns related to the rising popularity of online 'kidfluencers' and calls for more frameworks and potential legislation in this mostly unregulated environment. The reality our children face in modern media realms is something we'll never have to experience. Where once we used to play with toys, our kids now opt towards their devices for a preferred source of entertainment.

The scopes of online environments are projecting a number of queries: "Are our kids at risk of exploitation? Have we become lazy and let online spaces become our babysitter?" Dr Catherine Archer's recent paper published in M/C Journal has shed light on the concerns related to the rising popularity of 'kidfluencers' and calls for more frameworks and potential legislation in this mostly unregulated environment.

In her studies Dr. Archer noted that the global toy market is projected to grow from \$141.08 billion in 2021 to \$230.64 billion by 2028. The rise of the internet alongside media and digital technologies, has given toy marketers new opportunities to reach children directly, with marketers potentially having access to children 24/7.

Although it appears more children must be using toys from these figures, what

YouTube is now the medium of choice for most children, even more so than television.

research more accurately suggests is that toy marketing has evolved because children are now being used to persuade other children and their parents to buy toys via social media. "Kidfluencers' are blurring the lines between what we consider traditional toys with adult objects of desire," she said.

YouTube is now the medium of choice for most children, even more so than television, with data from the e-Safety commission in 2018 showing that 80% of children aged 8-12, and 86% of teens use the site. Dr Archer said the use of children as influencers on YouTube to market toys through toy review videos is now common, but she was concerned about advertising disguised as entertainment for children.

Although YouTube is the most popular social media platform for most children, Instagram is also a site where many children and teens spend their time. Dr Archer said analysis of these children's Instagram pages showed highly gendered promotion of toys and posts that regularly

blur the lines between adult and child items of desire. "The children promote a variety of high-end, aspirational tween, teen, and adult 'toys', including clothes, make-up, skincare and expensive cars."

Another finding of the research is the sexualisation of young girl influencers on Instagram. In Australia, and largely across the rest of the world, there are few regulations to protect children. Frameworks and potentially laws are needed, but while children continue to engage with social media so prolifically introducing regulation isn't easy. "Children gain playful enjoyment and entertainment from their time on social media, following and watching other children and adults," Dr. Archer adds.

"However, gendered marketing of toys and increased focus on appearance for girls through Instagram can be harmful to children's self-esteem, and there are concerns regarding the continued commodification of childhood," continue Dr Archer.

For her, more research is needed, and perhaps "a good place to start would be to talk to children about their views on the content they consume – often commercially focused advertorials masquerading as cute content."

The paper 'Play is Child's Work – On Instagram' is published in M/C Journal.

Lindfield Bowling Club Beginnings

Photos: Ku-ring-gai Historical Society

Judith Godden

We know that many lawn bowls clubs now offer barefoot bowling, but which North Shore one was associated with a nudist camp? The answer is the Lindfield Bowling Club (now the Lindfield Rollers Bowling Club) in Carlyle Road, East Lindfield.

The origins of the Lindfield Bowling Club go back to 1948 when a group of local men formed a committee to establish a bowling club in east Lindfield. The Club was incorporated in 1950 and an ambitiously constructed clubhouse opened two years later. It soon had a waiting list of men eager to join. As was usual for the time, a Ladies Auxiliary was formed to help the men. Eventually, that wasn't enough; the women acquired their own greens so they too could enjoy bowls.

All the greens were carved out of land which had been long neglected. In the remaining scrub leading down to Middle Harbour, tiger snakes and lyrebirds found refuge. The lyrebirds' beautiful plumage and amazing ability to mimic resulted in the lyrebird becoming the Club's official emblem. A flock of kookaburras was also a feature of the early Club, fed daily by the honorary gardener Jack Carr.

And what of the nudists? From the 1930s, 'naturists' had set up bush camps to enjoy what they saw as a healthier lifestyle without clothes. The idea was to experience the innocence enjoyed in the Garden of Eden. Outsiders scoffed at the philosophy and focused on the nudity, so that the naturists soon became known as nudists. In Sydney, being nude was only legal when on private property and out of public sight. In the 1950s, conservatives viewed nudism with extra suspicion because it was associated with the post-war influx of European migrants; it had been particularly popular in Germany in the inter-war period.

Ron Ashworth, an engineer who lived at Balgowlah, was the main promoter of Sydney's nudist camps. He began a number of publications to promote being nude, most notably *The Australian Sunbather; A Journal for Naturists*. He also founded the Sun and Country Club which bought sites in Sydney's bush for nudist camps. One camp was at Frenchs Forest, reportedly near the current Sydney Japanese International School. By 1951 Ron Ashworth claimed his Sun and Country Club had 430 members – a healthy number for a club but a tiny minority of Sydney's population (then around 1.7 million).

The bowlers and nudists clubs both carefully restricted membership to the 'respectable' middle class. Ron Ashworth protected his members' privacy by forbidding cameras and the use of surnames, but also their morals by forbidding dancing and alcohol. While there were shared values, the differences were massive – certainly no-one appears to have ever suggested that men should be flogged for playing bowls! And only in the nudists clubs was an all-over tan seen as a benefit of membership. While newspaper articles about nudists mention sun-lotion, most people in the 1950s were blissfully unaware of the dangers of skin cancer. They saw a tanned body as healthy and sunburn the price to pay for the joy of sunbaking.



Lindfield Bowling Club (top) and the Lindfield bowlers at dinner.

How did the Lindfield Bowling Club become associated with a nudist camp? According to early member Norm Tyler, the camp was opposite to the Club. The nudists were some distance away, on a rocky area on the other side of Middle Harbour, but still visible if you cared to look. And many men did care to look. The word spread, with Norm Tyler commenting that the first thing visitors to the Club asked about was not bowls, but the nudists. Whether the nudists themselves knew or cared is not recorded.

Today the Lindfield Rollers is a thriving club for men and women bowlers. It offers a range of activities, but a view of naked bodies is not one of its attractions!

This article is based on the archives of Lindfield Rollers Bowling Club and written with the assistance of Club President Roger Parks.

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

The Ku-ring-gai Historical Research Centre is located in the historic Old Gordon Public School building, which adjoins the Gordon Library, 799 Pacific Highway (cnr Pacific Hwy & Park Ave). Please see our website for opening hours.



Anurag Mahapatra/Unsplash

Improve Your Life with Yoga

Willow Berry

There's no denying the fact that regular exercise can boost one's overall health. Although our bodily capabilities are seen to change with time, exercising remains beneficial at all ages. Yoga has proved itself as an excellent form of physical activity for senior citizens.

Seniors yoga programs are very popular and can be suited to modes that are non-strenuous, less intense, meditative and/or restorative. The holistic nature of yoga conditions aspects of both the mind and body, hence why the practice has been recognised as particularly effective in treating a range of issues for aged individuals.

It's a great way to stay active, practice mindfulness and improve overall health. It also helps combat stress, fatigue and pain, whilst improving balance and mobility, relieving depression, and reducing blood pressure.

Falling is a leading cause of death and serious injury among ageing populations. Yoga has been proven to strengthen your core and lengthen your spine. As a result, one can sustain better posture and body awareness, steadily improving the balance and coordination needed to reduce the likelihood of falling.

In addition, research has shown yoga can reduce chronic inflammation. As we age our bodies become less limber, and joint pains and aches become more excessive. Yoga is the most natural solution when it comes to improving one's flexibility and joint mobility.

Yoga also involves breathing exercises that relax and oxygenate tissues; this in turn cultivates increased blood circulation through a healthier respiration rate, increased lung capacity and improved oxygen levels. Increased blood circulation will give the body more energy, stronger immunity, and even a more radiant complexion.

Mental health is just as important as physical health and the calming nature of Yoga can help alleviate stress and anxiety. The practice encourages mindful breathing

and meditation to ease the body's fight-or-flight response and focus on the present.

When we age our bodies are experiencing physiological changes, some of which contribute to poor sleep and/or Insomnia. There's key reasons why Yoga has been seen to reduce cases of restlessness, these include; exercise which will help you sleep more soundly; mindfulness and better breathing promotes melatonin production; and stress reduction plus a better mood reduces night time worrying.

Tips to Start your Yoga Practice

Make it Routine

Yoga does not produce instant results, in order to get the best benefits it's important to practice regularly. Frequency is important, a shorter timed session (15-30 minutes) that's done regularly is more effective than longer sessions done every now and then. Although commitment is essential, be sure to talk to your doctor before starting any exercise regime to make sure you're doing activities that are safe for your health and situation.

Make it Suit You

Yoga is for self improvement, and where self is implied it is essential to take things at your own pace. To gradually build strength and flexibility one must ease into the exercises, do not get pressured to keep up at the levels of others. Be sure to rest after every pose and never rush into new postures. Until your body has adjusted to your routine, it's best not to add any new movements. Listening to your body will promote the best outcomes.

Pain is Not a Gain

Yoga is not about endurance or exertion, pain and fatigue should not apply. If you overdo it you will likely injure yourself and while it's normal to feel a little discomfort as you begin to stretch your muscles, if you experience pain during a stretch or posture, don't over push it.

Water is Always Your Best Friend

As we've all been told, hydration is key. It's important to drink plenty of water before, during, and after yoga. Water will keep the body functioning at the highest level by regulating temperature, lubricating your joints, and transporting nutrients. Water is also vital for recovery, so keep sipping after exercise is over.

Yoga is Fun

Yoga is very much an enjoyable pastime. Whether it be in nature or surrounded by friends there's an experience and journey to be had. It is a non-competitive and gentle method of exercise. Relax and see where this fitness journey takes you.

Caring for the Carer: Managing Compassion Fatigue

Matt Oliver

Being a carer, whether it be for a family member or in a professional capacity, is incredibly fulfilling and rewarding. You're making a truly positive difference to someone's life, and in doing so will likely feel a great sense of satisfaction in what you're doing.

However, having said that, you're probably aware that it can also be very trying at times. From long hours to the physical and psychological demands of being a carer, you may find yourself sometimes feeling a bit flat.

At the end of the day, it's important to not only look after those in your care, but yourself as well. If you don't, you may begin to experience what's known as compassion fatigue.

When someone who is caring for others begins to feel an extreme burden – physically, emotionally, or both – due to their role as a carer, this is what's known as compassion fatigue.

Thankfully, there are several signs that you can look out for in yourself and other carers that may show you're experiencing strain.

Although some may compare compassion fatigue to job burnout, they're quite different from one another, burnout will usually happen over time, while the onset of compassion fatigue can sometimes be very sudden and seemingly come from nowhere.

There are a number of things you can do to help prevent compassion fatigue. First and foremost, it's vital that if you do begin to feel run down that you spend some time rejuvenating yourself. At the end of the day, you're likely going to be much



more effective as a carer when you're rested and feeling your best.

Another way is by looking after your body. Proper diet, daily exercise and a good sleep schedule all are crucial for overall wellbeing. You may not be able to spend hours preparing dinner or hitting the gym, but a little can go a long way. Make healthy changes wherever you can, whenever you can, and you'll start to feel the difference.

It's also beneficial to create a self-care plan. This will involve developing a schedule that includes planning time for physical, social and self-care practices that will help to keep you rested, recharged and ready for your carer's role.

Taking care of yourself is just as important as those you care for, if you wish to avoid compassion fatigue, be sure to spend quality time on YOU.



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Preparing for the Frosty Forecast

Rejimon Punchayil

Winter is the time to review your comfort in and around the house. Cooler temperatures can lure us to stay longer in our beds. This season calls for more time spent indoors, making it essential to find a cozy place to sit down and relax.

Begin by assessing your bed and pillow. Are they providing you with the support and comfort you deserve during this season? One creative solution is to consider an electric bed, offering a range of great features such as adjustable positions and pressure relief while in bed. Alternatively,

if an electric bed isn't your preference, have you thought about replacing your existing mattress with an electric mattress? These innovative mattresses provide all the wonderful features an electric bed offers. A comfortable sleeping surface should be a thing to consider during winter.

If you plan to spend longer time at home, a relaxing chair is worth the consideration. A Rise Recliner or a lift chair serve a dual purpose: the rising action helps you stand up and sit down independently, while the reclining action enhances your comfort, even to the point of becoming a temporary bed. It's important to know what to look for when selecting a rise recliner that suits

your needs. It may be handy to get prepared with a heat bag, braces for knee or wrist, or other solutions for Arthritis.

By considering these essentials, you can create a cozy and restful environment for the winter season. Take time to review your surroundings and invest in the luxury you deserve. Embrace the colder months with a warm and inviting atmosphere that allows you to relax and enjoy the comforts of home.

If you would like to know more about these or other helpful solutions, please visit www.comfortdiscovered.com or their spacious showroom.

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An Under Insured Australia

Willow Berry

Often when we get caught up in what's going on in the now and immediate future, we forget to prepare for what's coming further down the line. In new research carried out by Australian finance and economic broker, Savvy, life insurance coverage among Australia's population is an area of concern.

The survey found that:

- 44% of Australians do not have any life insurance and have no intention of taking out a policy.
- 46% of women vs 42% of men say they don't have and don't want life insurance.
- 29% of Australians have life insurance policies through their superannuation fund.
- Three in five (59%) say that death cover is the most important aspect of a life insurance policy.

With the staggering pressures of Australia's current cost-of-living crisis, as well as the high percentage of people who don't have life insurance, the likelihood that plans to take out policies in the the future will increase - is not

promising. Only 13% of those surveyed said that they don't have life insurance, but are considering buying a policy.

Take away the 46% of women and 42% of men who say they have no desire to get a life insurance policy, we're left with a little under a third with basic life insurance provided through their superannuation fund (33%) and only 11% who have taken out a life insurance policy through a dedicated provider.

According to the Financial Services Council there are an estimated 1 million Australians underinsured for death/Total & Permanent Disability (TPD) and about 3.4 million underinsured for income protection insurance.

If Life Insurance Plans are failing to meet the desires of people, where are the fall points? What are the needs Australians want to be met in these policies? 59% of Australians agree that it should cover death (i.e. a beneficiary receives a payment upon the policy holder's death), with 67% of 35-44 year olds citing it as the most important component of a life insurance policy.

According to Savvy, 42% said that trauma and accident cover is important,

with 44% of respondents agreeing that income protection insurance and TPD insurance are important features. 48% of women said that trauma and accident insurance is important, compared to 37% of men.

Savvy's PR and Economics expert, Adrian Edlington is concerned by the fact that so many Australians seem to understand the value of life insurance yet don't have a policy. "Life insurance in all its forms, be it death cover, income protection, or total and permanent disability is not only about protecting yourself but protecting your family and community for the worst," he says.

"With costs of living rising and inflation still biting, even a temporary shortfall in income could prove disastrous for many families. Though communities would love to help someone when they're unable to, the fact is that few communities can afford to at the moment. That's why people should find a good life insurance premium that covers them adequately without spending too much."

"But the ultimate benefit is this - peace of mind."

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This new hearing technology utilises an advanced automatic signal processing system. The technology provides a higher level of sound performance, that focuses on speech in more environments and aims to provide a personalised listening experience.

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Research is revealing the impact that untreated hearing loss has on dementia, and how it also increases the chance of falling over. The greater the hearing loss the more negative the impact. Mental health can take a toll with social withdrawal due to stress leading to isolation and depression. Brain health



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and wellbeing increases when we improve our hearing.

The new products are designed for those who appreciate vitality, and pro-actively take steps to improve their wellbeing. The aesthetics, comfort and ease-of-use offered by these products make this an easy solution. And should you wish to connect to your mobile or the new app

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Handler Wendy James with Pippin and (r-l) resident Rod McCormack, wife Sue McCormack and Kerrie Jackson

Greyhounds to the Rescue

An Australian-first pilot of rescued greyhounds visiting HammondCare aged care homes will be expanded, so more older Australians, including many living with dementia, can enjoy the feelings of engagement and improved wellbeing that comes from spending time with animals.

Under the Hounds Helping Humans pilot, nine Greyhound Rescue teams of handlers and hounds have been visiting residents at HammondCare's Horsley, Wahroonga, and Darlinghurst aged care homes since June last year.

The HammondCare Foundation, the fundraising arm of HammondCare, has launched the Lend a Helping Hound campaign to raise the costs of expanding the program. While the handlers are volunteers, there are training, administrative and incidental costs. To donate, go to www.hammond.com.au/taxappeal.

Many of the 2000 residents who will potentially benefit live with dementia. Greyhound Rescue President Nat Panzarino said feedback from the handlers on the pilot was all positive. They could see the pilot making happier residents. "They have enjoyed watching the special connections between the residents and greyhounds grow each week they came to visit. There is genuine excitement when the hounds arrive," she said.

"The handlers have absolutely loved being involved as well, it's very fulfilling, and for many of the hounds it has quickly become their favourite activity," she said.

The pilot operated within tight processes with both participating residents and greyhounds carefully chosen. The greyhounds were trained to prepare them for an aged care environment, including the sights and equipment commonly found in an aged care home, such as wheelchairs.

Associate Professor Steve Macfarlane, Dementia Centre Head of Clinical Services, said research had found significant health benefits for people living with dementia from animal engagement. Previous animal engagement programs with seniors have pointed to improvements in quality of life through decreased loneliness and depression, increasing physical activity and improved socialisation.

"What better way to evaluate the success of animal engagement than to see the reactions from the residents – they clearly enjoy the interactions immensely." Prof Macfarlane said.

He said greyhounds were great for people in aged care because of both their calm, affectionate nature and their higher stature, making them accessible to people confined to beds, chairs or wheelchairs.

When Trains Stopped at Railway Refreshment Rooms

Margaret Simpson

Railway Refreshment Rooms at stations provided passengers with either light refreshments or full meals and were spaced at strategic intervals along the line. They were initially leased to private operators, but in 1916, NSW Railway took over and began regulating prices. At this time the Department introduced their famous crockery, glass and EPNS silverware branded "NSWGR / RRR" (New South Wales Government Railways / Railway Refreshment Room).

At Central Station there was a fine dining room, grill room and cafeteria, catering for 500 travellers at a time. Around the State, 54 Railway Refreshment Rooms were located at various stations. After the train pulled in, passengers had about 20 minutes to line up at the long counter for their tea, sandwiches and pies while the locomotive tender was refilled with water. A cooked dinner could be ordered via the telegraph from an earlier stop and comprised three-course meals such as soup, salmon mayonnaise, lambs fry, pork sausages, roasts, steam puddings and apple pies. When the time was up a bell would be rung heralding the imminent departure of the train.

Passengers could also eat in dining cars attached to some express trains, in buffet cars on fast passenger trains or have picnic hampers delivered to their compartments!

More on-train catering, diesel engines which did not need to stop for coal and water, and a decrease in the use of railways, due to greater travel by car and plane, saw the decline of refreshment rooms. The last one closed at Lithgow in 1990. Today, there is little indication of their existence at most stations. One notable exception is the famous refreshment room at Junee Station pictured. It has been restored and re-opened as The Railway Station Café, complete with its old oak counters, huge mirrored walls and cast-iron columns.



Everyone has something that brings them joy, for Ann it is cooking. With Anglicare residential aged care, Ann can indulge her passion because person-centred care is what we're all about.

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Growing Herbs at Home

Willow Berry

There's no better feeling than tucking into fresh, home grown produce. Not only does it reward you with nature's healthy goodness, but it always tastes a little better when you know you've grown it yourself.

Understandably, not everyone is a born gardener or has the space to create their own garden, however if growing your own produce is something that you think you might be into, starting an indoor herb garden may be perfect for you.

An at home herb garden is a fun and easy way to be sustainable and liven up indoor spaces. As long as you have a space that feeds sufficient light throughout the day you're well on your way.

Perennial herbs are easiest to grow from young plants that you buy at a garden centre. Some herbs are easy to grow from seeds, and other types such as mint and basil can be easily grown from cuttings.

Herbs are ideal because they are low maintenance and many species will only require minimal watering and basic soils. When it comes to selecting the best herbs to grow indoors, make it personal and pick what you like.

BASIL

One of everyone's favourites, the perfect pairing for tomatoes and it's easy to grow indoors. Pinch off individual leaves and add to salads, sandwiches, and sauce. You can even make your own pesto. Plant

seeds or purchase small plants and pot them in rich, organic potting soil. Basil likes heat and bright light, try to avoid cool, drafty spots, especially in the winter.

BAY LAUREL

This Mediterranean shrub and its thick, flavourful leaves is an ingredient in most soups and stews. Pick individual leaves and dry them for storage. The oldest leaves have the strongest flavour. Plant in fast-draining soil around good air circulation to prevent disease.

CHERVIL

An essential ingredient found in French foods such as Bénaise sauce. A great pairing with fish, potatoes, steamed carrots, and eggs. Snip fresh leaves for salads, steep them in white wine vinegar for dressings or add them at the end of cooking to retain their flavour. Start chervil seeds in moist potting soil in deep pots.

CHIVES

Our onion-like friend adds a mild kick to eggs, soups, and salads and doubles as a perfect garnish. Make sure when harvesting the sprouts you leave a few centimetres of growth so that plants can resprout. Start with a purchased plant and pot it in rich, organic soil. Chives grow best in bright light.

MINT

There's a number of types of mint from peppermint, spearmint, chocolate, and more, pick your favourite and snip leaves and sprigs for tea and mixed drinks, salads, and desserts. Mint plants usually grow rambunctiously, and their trailing, fragrant stems make them attractive

houseplants. Keep the soil moist and give them moderate to strong light.

OREGANO

A must-have herb that adds dynamic to almost any dish. Strip the leaves from snapped stems and add to tomato sauces, meat, casseroles, soups, and stews. The dried leaves are more pungent than fresh. Water when the surface of the soil is dry, but don't let it dry out. Give the plants moderate to strong light.

PARSLEY

Whether it is curly or flat-leaf, this herb deserves a place in your garden. Parsley adds bright colour and flavour to soups, salads, and fresh sauces. It's essential in tabbouleh and delicious in pesto, stuffing, chicken, fish, and vegetable dishes. Harvest individual leaves by pinching stems off near the base. Grow in a deep pot and provide strong light.

ROSEMARY

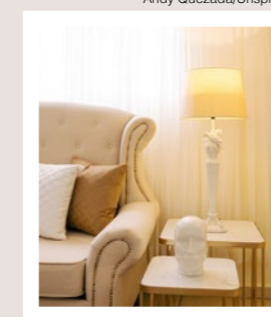
This needle leaved herb pairs perfectly with chicken, pork, lamb, soups, potatoes, and olive oil. Snip sprigs and toss them into soups, or strip the leaves and mince. Rosemary can tolerate hot, sunny, dry locations, but prefers cooler temperatures as long as the light is strong.

THYME

Versatility is this herb's middle name, it can be made a key ingredient in nearly every cuisine of the world. With its tiny leaves and trailing stems it also has a natural houseplant appeal. Pot thyme in a warm, sunny spot and water when the surface of the soil is dry, but don't let it wilt.

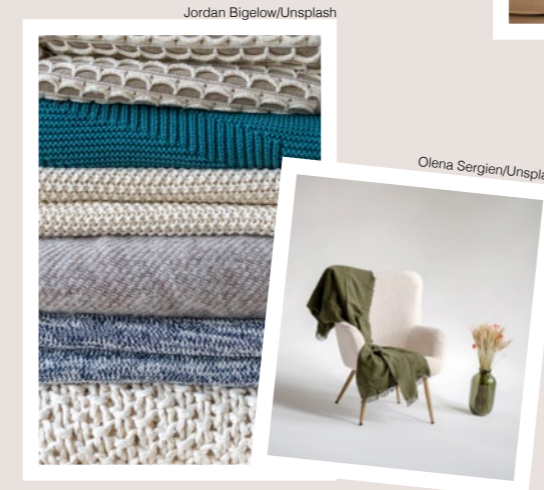
Lovely Winter Interior Trends

Winter is officially upon us, meaning it's the perfect time to rug-up our homes in lots of warm materials and cosy textures. But just because it's chilly, doesn't mean our interiors can't still be stylish. Here's a roundup of the biggest home trends, according to the experts themselves, for this season.



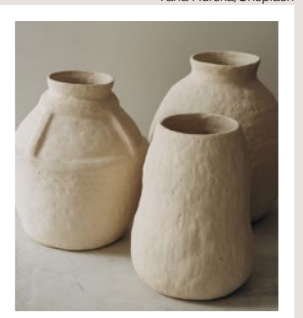
Fuzzy armchairs are chic and comfy

Who wouldn't want to immediately sit in this chair given how cosy it looks! Fuzzy armchairs are a great statement piece and can slot in perfectly to a bunch of spaces in the home, whether it be the lounge area, sitting room, a study or the bedroom. Plus, there's a bunch of armchairs like these available on the market right now.



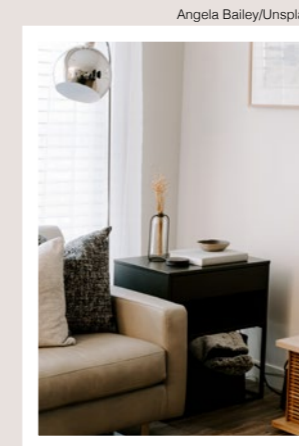
Ceramics are the perfect accessory

If you're looking to update what's on your mantelpiece or add a new piece of interest to your coffee table or the side chest of drawers in your bedroom, ceramics are the way to go. If you go into any major homewares retailer at the moment, you will see shelves of ceramics and pottery. That tells us those items have been a hit with customers, which is always a good sign.



Throw rugs the colour of the sea

Throw rugs are a must in winter. But as for the colour? Take inspiration from the coastal landscape. Dulux's colour of the year is a gorgeous deep blue, called Kimberley Sea. And interestingly, another interior juggernaut Sherwin-Williams has their colour of the year as a softer grey blue. Simply put – embrace the colours of the beach, whether it be the dark blues and greys of the ocean or soft sand reminiscent of Hyams Beach on the NSW South Coast.



Mood lighting is everything

Last but certainly not least we have mood lighting. Now this can be done in a bunch of ways, whether that's adding a dimming feature on your down-lights, purchasing some new candles or a really funky floor lamp. As any great interior designer will tell you: lighting is the most vital aspect of the ambiance and mood of a room. This especially rings true in winter!

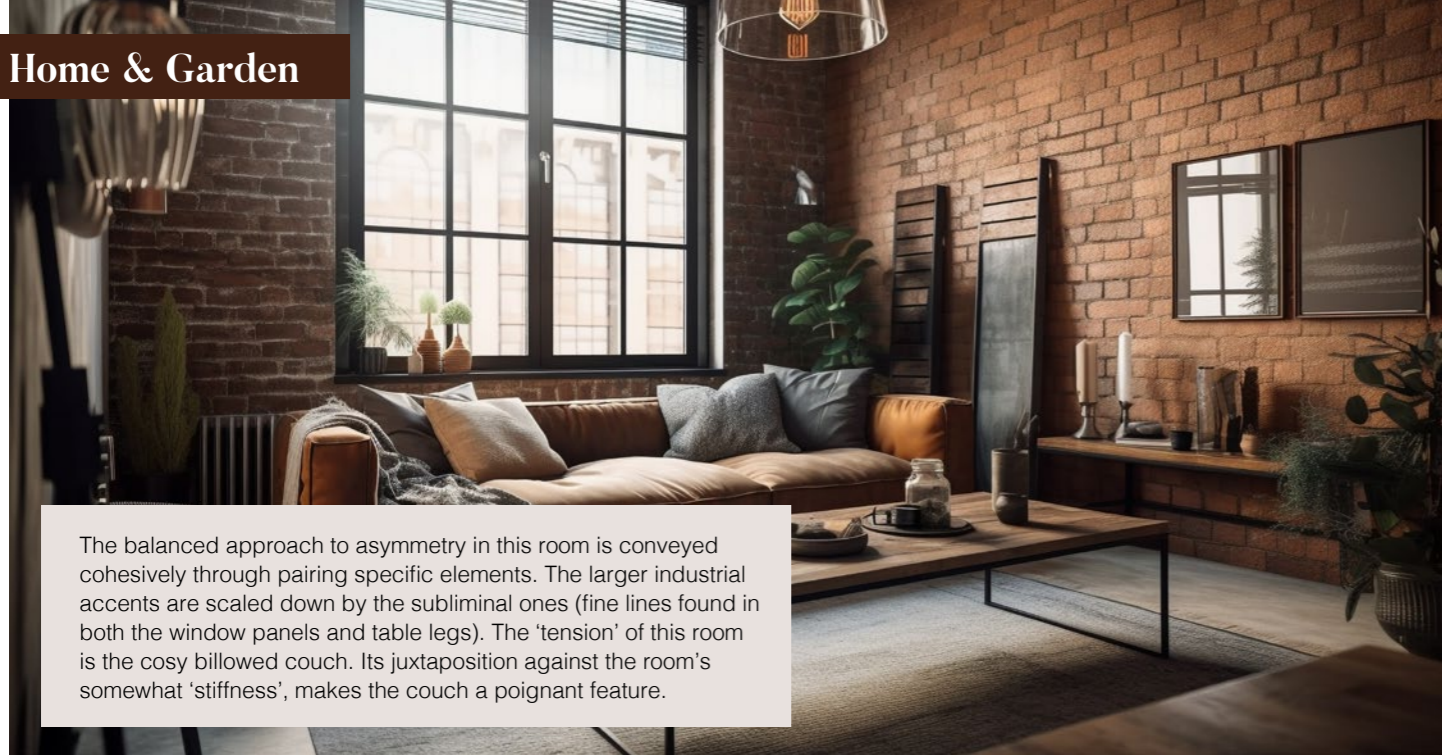
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The balanced approach to asymmetry in this room is conveyed cohesively through pairing specific elements. The larger industrial accents are scaled down by the subliminal ones (fine lines found in both the window panels and table legs). The 'tension' of this room is the cosy billowed couch. Its juxtaposition against the room's somewhat 'stiffness', makes the couch a poignant feature.

Balancing a Rustic Interior

Willow Berry

The idea of rustic and outdoorsy interiors may seem somewhat off putting during the colder months, but with the right balance, you can create the perfect atmosphere for your home.

Because it's winter, comfort is of course key. The perfect natural and rustic interior must balance harsher accents with softer decor. Everything you have in a room has visual weight. Some things "weigh" more to the eye than others. We should be thinking about the visual weight of everything in a room in order to create balance on a virtual scale.

Often when designing a room's interior we jump ahead of ourselves. Say you see a beautiful wooden side table, but think it'd be too cumbersome within a living space - that is when balance comes in. For this, you need to consider three factors: scale and proportion; symmetry and pairs; and asymmetry and tension. If you love something enough you can make it work, and once you know how, it becomes an easy task.

To have a perfectly balanced interior scale and proportion should blend between elements. Scale will concern the size of an object compared with the space that it's in. Whereas proportion refers to the relationship and balance of different elements to one another - such as shape, colour, height and texture.

Read your space and assess the best way to use items within it. Sometimes big bold items can create a sense of space in a small room while too many small pieces can make a large room feel cluttered and disorganised.



There's a surprising sense of tranquillity that is created through this space. The cosy accents such as the rug, basket, and candles balance out the harshness of the metal bath. The paired shelves placed asymmetrically elevate the room's style.

Symmetry is everywhere in nature and it's beautiful within our homes. You can achieve symmetrical balance when the visual weight of both sides of your design is perfectly equal. Symmetry and pairing go hand in hand. Using pillows, chairs and decorative ornaments in pairs tends to enhance focal points within a room.

Asymmetry can be just as impactful as symmetry within a room. It's not about being chaotic, we are still trying to balance

the decorating scale - but each side of the scale has different objects in it.

Tension is the exciting part of the room, the thing that makes a room seem extraordinarily interesting and full of life. It is the element of surprise and is the tell tale sign of your personality showing through your decor.

This rustic design style highlights the authentic beauty of natural materials, celebrates unfussy tastes and simply makes us feel at home. Rustic interiors should boast a perfect balance of rugged and cosy. Add a throw, some extra pillows, or a couple of candles to a room and see the space you can bring to life.



This hallway may appear quite chaotic, but imitation emphasised through shapes and lines makes it pleasantly cohesive. The experimental proportions are balanced out by the minimal colour palette.

What's Your Kitchen Style?

Tamara Thomas-Barns

When it comes to renovating your kitchen there are a million questions to ask, but this is probably the most important one to consider: What is your kitchen style?

Shaker, Hamptons, Coastal, Beachy, Modern, Shark nose, Industrial, these are all terms used to describe a design (and kitchen) style, but just what does it all mean?

Quite simply, more traditional styles (like the Hamptons and Shaker) are usually more decorative (with routed out door profiles, glass or mesh, capping, moulding and canopies); while the more modern style is usually all about the clean sleek lines, less clutter, but often more adventurous colour choices.

So, which one is for you and how do you decide? Well, the first thing to consider is the style of the house. When a kitchen designer walks into your hour house, they are not only looking at the room the kitchen is in and what you are discussing, they are considering the exterior of the building, the style of architecture, and the decorative style you have already used in the rest of the house.

All these things will be considered when making design suggestions for you. Another idea is to look at photos of kitchens you like and make notes about what it is you like about them. Is it the Shaker door, that amazing pendant light or that vibrant green cabinetry that's caught your eye?

Nowadays it's also quite acceptable to combine modern and traditional. We

selected a few options to spark your design creativity.

So be daring, be confident in your choices and consider working with a kitchen

designer so that they can use their expertise to help you work out exactly what your style is. Get in touch with Sensational Kitchens today to see how they can help you create your sensational new kitchen.



If you don't want to risk, go for a classic kitchen. It's timeless, eternal, and beautiful.



You can choose modern with no handles, clean lines, and adventurous colours.



Consider a traditional shaker door with a modern shark nose edge profile combined with a flat panel timber grain as with this kitchen.



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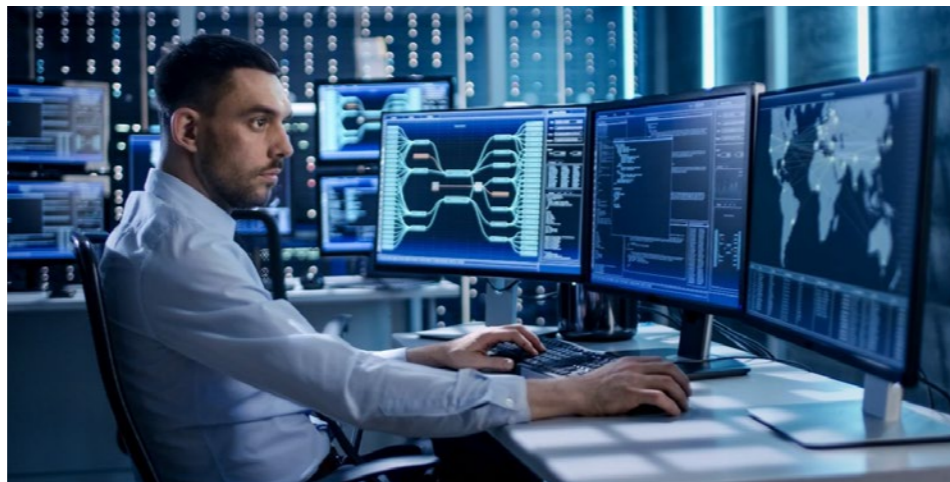
Secrets of a Successful Financial Planning Business

Mark Lewin

A business system consists of documented procedures that guide the major activities within a business. These procedures outline the steps necessary to achieve the desired output. In the context of a financial planning practice, these procedures may include onboarding new clients, constructing a record of advice, or conducting annual review meetings.

Many young planners start their own practices without established systems, or they join practices that lack structure and refined processes. Initially, their focus is on finding new clients, making sales, and repeating the cycle. However, after years of this repetitive activity, the compliance and administrative burden becomes overwhelming, and they realise that they don't own a practice—they are the practice.

To address this issue, it is important to build a well-developed business system. By creating procedures and checklists for staff to follow, consistency and reliability can be achieved.



This system will provide the practice with the advantages of efficiency and leverage.

Back Office Hero (BOH) has written the guide "From Impossible to Predictable" to assist planners in transitioning from practice owner to business manager. The guide outlines a roadmap for building a business system and provides valuable insights.

Only with a well-developed business system can a practice become a process-driven growth machine. Embracing technology, utilising data for decision-making, and effectively outsourcing non-core activities are key aspects that the management team must embrace.

Successful business owners and managers leverage their resources, selectively

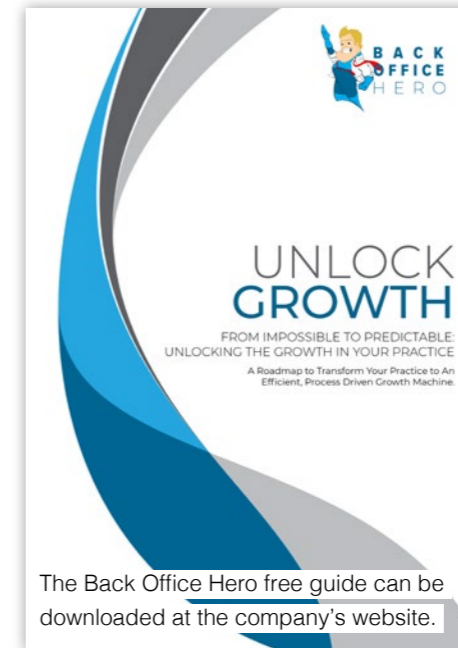
invite ideal clients, and are confident enough to let go of low-value clients. By implementing the principles outlined by BOH, improved profitability and increased enterprise value can be achieved.

In many back-office environments, disorganisation, inefficiency, and slow processes are common. This leads to mistakes, stagnant productivity, and negative impacts on the bottom line. Building a system that saves time for staff members allows them to engage with clients on a deeper level, leading to positive client relationships, repeat business, and brand loyalty.

Allocating sufficient resources to build a well-organised and harmonious back office is essential. Documenting procedures, checklists, and templates, as well as utilising available technology, are important steps in streamlining the system. BOH can provide guidance and simplify this process.

A well-designed business system incorporates multiple checklists and templates to minimise human error and improve efficiency. Assigning ownership of procedures to staff members empowers them to make incremental improvements and reduces issues requiring attention.

Outsourcing becomes easier with well-written procedures, as the quality of



The Back Office Hero free guide can be downloaded at the company's website.

the output directly reflects the quality of the procedures. Transitioning into a management role involves delegating responsibilities and defining roles within the team. The "Back Office Hero" emerges as the head of operations, responsible for operational efficiency.

Maintaining the business system is crucial. Process mapping, documentation, and leveraging existing office technology are

key factors in optimising productivity. Utilising metrics and analytics allows for monitoring results and making informed business decisions.

Preparing the practice for future possibilities, such as selling the business, demonstrates commitment to preparedness and operational efficiency. It fosters the fundamentals of a great business, including withstanding scrutiny, managing risks, creating a transferable business, and fostering effective client engagement.

BOH Academy offers an online course that gradually helps build the business system through various learning modules. Taking steps to design and build a quality business system is crucial for achieving flexible working hours, being your own boss, and improving your lifestyle.

Embracing a well-developed business system allows for a better life within and outside the business.

The free guide "From Impossible to Predictable Transformation" can be downloaded at www.backofficehero.com.au.

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Coconut Oil Pulling

Willow Berry

Coconut oil is well known for having a number of nourishing properties, it can improve cognitive function, metabolism, and hair and skin health. The oil is popular in many health fads, one of those being a common Ayurvedic practice called coconut oil pulling.

Coconut oil pulling is where you take coconut oil, which will be solid at room temperature, and put it in your mouth. You don't eat it, but instead your body's naturally warm temperature melts the coconut oil into a liquid. Essentially you will pull the coconut oil around your mouth and in between your teeth - similar to the way you would if you were swishing mouthwash around.

So, here are the details;

- Measure out about a tablespoon of coconut.
- Swish it around in your mouth for 15-20 minutes, try your best not to swallow any.
- Spit the oil into a bin after you're done. Avoid spitting it into the sink or toilet, as it may lead to pipe build-up and clogging.
- Before eating or drinking anything, rinse your mouth out well with water.

Now there really isn't any firm or extensive evidence to show the benefits of oil pulling, but like any health fad some will swear by it, and some will give it a miss. One thing is certain, coconut oil pulling is in no way a replacement for brushing and flossing your teeth, it's an additive to oral health, like a mouthwash is as such.

While there isn't necessarily any type of whitening or bleaching agent in coconut oil, properties of the oil may help buffer stain prevention which is why you might find your smile is looking brighter. Coconut oil pulling has also been coined as a natural alternative for reducing bad breath, with some considering it just as effective as traditional treatments

There are approximately 700 types of bacteria that can live in your mouth, and up to 350 of them may be found in your mouth at any given time. Certain types of harmful bacteria can contribute to problems like tooth decay and gum disease. Reviews claim oil pulling combats tooth decay because it helps reduce bacteria inside of the mouth.

Combating gum inflammation is also mentioned in a few studies that were performed comparing chlorhexidine rinse, which is a prescription mouthwash, and coconut oil. Scientists found each method shared a similar reduction of gingival symptoms, and considering chlorhexidine can cause tooth staining, coconut oil may appear the better option.

Since coconut oil is a natural moisturiser it can aid in alleviating chronic dry mouth symptoms. Just like you would rub it on your skin when you have dry skin, it'll combat any dry or sticky tissues in the mouth - as well as chapped lips.

Coconut oil pulling definitely boasts a number of positives, while extensive research does not exist to back up the practice as revolutionary for one's health, it definitely adds benefits that are free of harm. So perhaps give it a try and see how you fare.

Mary Grace, Blemish Serum

It's a scientific fact that cold air holds less moisture. As the temperature falls, reduction in atmospheric water molecules can dry out the epidermis and signal our skin to produce more sebum which can result in clogged pores and seasonal breakouts.

According to Mary Gouganovski, the founder of sensitive skincare brand, Mary Grace, acne tends to worsen and become more stubborn during winter months due to excessive skin drying.

"As we expose the epidermis to dry air and artificial heat sources, it becomes difficult for our skin to maintain healthy barrier function and regulate proper moisture levels."

"This leads to an increase in oil production which can irritate the skin and serve as a bacterial catalyst for opportunistic acne," says Mary.

To combat this, it's important to develop a skincare regimen that is rich in replenishing ingredients such as hyaluronic acid, ceramides, amino acids, and sugar alcohols.

Should a pesky spot make an appearance, Mary recommends her naturally formulated Blemish Serum which contains a host of acne-fighting ingredients such as pineapple extract, tea tree, lemon myrtle, and white willow bark.

"Designed as a daily spot treatment and all-over face serum, it will help kill surface bacteria on the skin, balance sebum production, dissolve dead skin cells, and alleviate redness and post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation," Mary adds.

Mary Grace, Blemish Serum, 50ml, \$50 RRP, available at www.marygrace.com.au, visit the website to find out more.



Meeting the Post-surgical Needs of Breast Cancer Survivors

Clothes are a fun way for people to express their personal style, they keep us warm and protected - and most of us would probably go crazy without a little bit of retail therapy here and there. Clothes can also be used for greater goods and at Elleran Lingerie they put the care into clothes with a range of post-surgical catered garments.

For the past 20 years, Elleran Lingerie has stocked local communities with a wide range of lingerie, clothing, swimwear and accessories, combining both local and European brands of excellent quality and all inclusive sizes.

Elleran takes pride in addressing the post-surgical needs of breast cancer survivors with a wide range of breast forms, bras, swimwear and clothing. They provide a comfortable, discreet and friendly environment for women to receive an un-rushed post mastectomy fitting from their fully trained staff, who provide patience, understanding and expert advice.

Elleran will assist in finding the right bra that is both comfortable



and fashionable from as early as six weeks post-surgery. They prefer to emphasise the importance of wearing a weighted breast form to clients, as this avoids possible physical impacts such as spinal curvature, shoulder drop, muscle contracture with accompanying discomfort and balance problems.

The staff are always happy to reassess your needs as time progresses, and to provide forms and bra receipts for Medicare and Private Health Fund claims. Their Chatswood store has an excellent range of bras for larger cup sizes up to HH and J.

From June, Elleran will be the New Owner of the iconic Sydney Breast Form fitting salon, Leila O'Toole, which has been in business for 50 years.

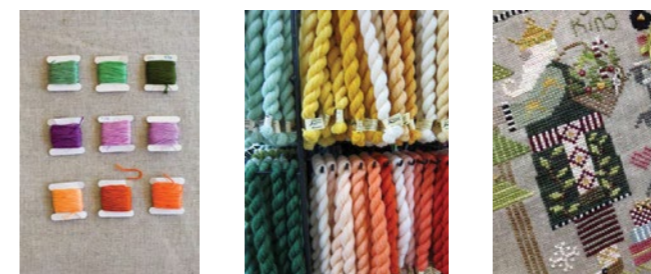
Elleran Lingerie has Three boutiques, one in Chatswood Westfield, one in St Ives Shopping Village and Dymocks Building in Sydney.

For more information visit www.elleran.com and www.Leilaotoole.com.



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Dental Care for Patients with Special Needs

Dr Ian Sweeney

Dental care for patients with special needs is as imperative as it is for the rest of the population. We often see 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 decay and or gum disease. If left untreated, these diseases may lead to serious infections, which may ultimately be life threatening. Pain from dental disease and infection may exacerbate or cause challenging behaviours, particularly when a person is unable to communicate adequately.

It is therefore imperative that patients with special needs receive regular dental treatment at a facility that specifically caters for their often complex and challenging requirements.

Today there are numerous techniques available to ensure that all patients are able to access dental care appropriate to their needs. This may include various forms of behavioural management, the use of conscious sedation as well as general anaesthesia.

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 are able to 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.



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

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 senior patients, patients with special needs and patients with complex medical conditions. www.northsidedental.com.au

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Delicious Date Night Venues

Tayla Foster

Finding the perfect place for date night away from kids and responsibilities is a tough gig. What can be even harder is finding a place that is affordable, provides high quality service and delicious food... or maybe it's agreeing on where to go. Well, call a cease fire on the arguments, and say hello to three delicious locations around Ku-ring-gai, ready to tickle your tastebuds, and warm your hearts.

BRASSERIE L'ENTRECÔTE

A traditional Parisian steak house located in the heart of Pymble, known for its mouth-watering steaks, divine customer service and of course the traditional French cuisine that includes a variety of dishes such as, snails, coq au vin and profiteroles. Locals have raved about their delightful experience at this venue and recommend it to visitors from far and wide.

KIPLING'S GARAGE BAR

If it's a hearty meal and a fun, funky location for a girls' night out, then look no further than Kipling's Garage Bar in Tarramurra. Their variety of tap beer and tapas treats is enough to quench any thirst and feed that strong appetite for a good time and a laugh. Patrons describe the venue as heaven on earth and a place they hope stays open for all of time.



THE BULLHORN SALOON

A trip to America costs far too much money and of course, taking time off work is harder than getting rice out of a toddler's fist. But at the Bullhorn Saloon in Wahroonga, you'll feel like you're at a rodeo in the heart of the United States. Enjoy incredible cheeseburgers that will melt in your mouth, and meat that is slow cooked to perfection. Who needs to travel overseas, when you can go just down the road?

Warmer, with Massaman Curry

Hollie Jones

As cool temperatures begin to wrap their icy fingers around the door frame of Sydney's North Shore, I thought it the perfect time to introduce one of the most wholesome, moreish one bowl meals I can think of.

Lamb shanks are always synonymous with comfort food and for me, this dish is as close to a hug in a bowl as you can get.

Combining a fatty cut of meat with flavours heavily influenced by foreign cultures and slow cooking in liquid; delivers flavour from the bone, the melt in your mouth meat and Spices such as cumin, coriander, cloves, nutmeg, cinnamon and cardamom.

Originating in Malaysia, Massaman curry is a bit of an outlier in Thai cuisine as the dish draws heavily from Persian Muslim culture of the 17th century. Travelling Persian merchants were responsible for the curry's popularity amongst royalty and hence is traditionally paired with chicken, beef, lamb, mutton, or goat.

Today's recipe is kept simple by using a store bought Massaman curry base and



with a quick and easy 10 minute prep - what's not to love?

Ingredients

- 1 x 114g can MAESRI Massaman Curry Paste
- 1.5kg Lamb Shanks
- 400ml coconut milk
- 2 cups Vegeta vegetable stock
- 1 white or brown onion, chopped roughly
- 400g small potatoes (or large ones chopped into 3cm pieces)
- 1 x star anise
- 1 x cinnamon stick
- 200g carrots, chopped the same as potato (optional)
- Coriander, chilli, sesame seeds to garnish

Method

- Preheat oven to 180 degrees
- Stir to combine curry paste, coconut milk and stock in your baking dish
- Add onion, potato, carrot (if using), star anise, cinnamon and lamb.
- Stir everything and turn shanks to ensure everything is coated in sauce
- Bake covered for 2 hours, covered
- Remove foil and bake for a further 1.5 hours, turning shanks 2 to 3 times until meat starts to fall off bone
- Remove lamb and shred meat, stir sauce until combined, then add back your lamb.

All that's now left to do is serve with white jasmine rice, get comfy and enjoy your sensational curry!



Hollie is a proud mother of two and has owned and managed cafes and restaurants for over ten years. Find out more about her recipes at: Instagram @hollie_and_lola

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Sommelier's Guide to Winter Wines

Natalie Mark

With the colder months well and truly upon us, Aperol fiestas and frozen daiquiri Decembers seem a thing of the past. Wine however, is always on the cards. Here's your Sommelier's guide to five wonderful winter wines.

1. 2018 Rockford Basket Press Shiraz

Delicious, juicy red winter wine from Barossa Valley! This Shiraz is made via traditional winemaking techniques. Rockford wines own Robert O'Callaghan uses restored wine-making machinery and equipment from the last Century. The wine itself boasts vibrant red cherry, plum and blackberry fruity notes, with French oak and a hint of pepper to end. This wine has a long smooth finish and is one to have on a special night in, as it's a prestigious wine!



3. 2021 19 Crimes Snoop Cali Red

The richness of the Zinfandel in this Californian red wine gives it body, you'll find dark fruit and spice, along with the Petite Syrah and Merlot, we also get cherry, raspberry and strawberry flavours. This is a fun wine to drink on a girl's night in, or movie night! You can easily get carried away with this wine because of the soft tannins, and it is a superb drinking red for winter!



2. 2016 Henschke Keyneton Euphonium

A perfect blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Shiraz wine! The dark fruit flavours, right amount of oak, and soft velvety texture makes it very easy to drink. This has to be one of my favourite Australian red wine's!



4. 2018 Vasse Felix Cabernet Sauvignon

I highly recommend this lush, deep ruby coloured bold wine - and it's the perfect pairing to any date night! Enjoy this full-bodied, silky textured Cabernet Sauvignon from Margaret River, with earthy tasting notes of leather and smoke, and jammy dark cherry, plus a plum and blackberry finish.



5. 2015 Chateau Rauzan-Segla, Margaux

This dry, elegant, floral Bordeaux Margaux has a full body, but isn't too heavy. It has powerful plum, red, blue and black berry notes, with some wet earth and leather flavours: bringing out this strong, well structured and balanced wine. Prepare a French cheese and Charcuterie plate to start with family and friends, or have a Sunday Roast of lamb and vegetables, and this old World wine will hit the spot!



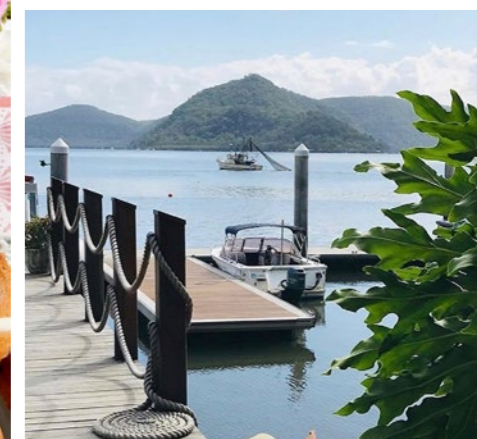
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Thermos Faves for Winter Days

Willow Berry

As the winter chills roll in our desire for a warm hearty meal grows. It may be time to consider investing in a Thermos. Whether you're on the move, in and out of work, or headed to a picnic, a Thermos' vacuum insulation technology will keep your food or drinks hot.

The next thing to think about is what meals you'll be making for your Thermos ventures. We've compiled a couple options to get the ideas flowing.



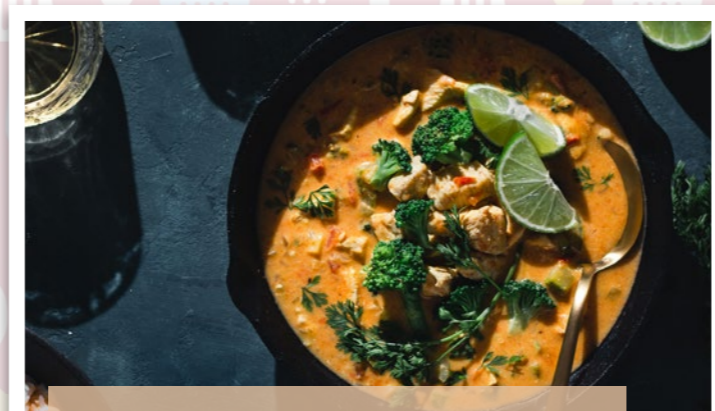
Veggie Noodle Stir Fry

It doesn't all have to be about the sauce. A good veggie packed stir fry is a perfect additive in one's Thermos.



Spaghetti Bolognese

You can't ever say no to a little Italian. A good old homemade Spaghetti Bolognese is the perfect meal to have on hand.



Chicken Curry

It's hard to go by a good Chicken Curry. Get the senses tingling in the cold with a nice spicy sauce and some juicy pieces of chicken.



Hearty Beef Casserole

I think a Hearty Beef Casserole has to be a quintessential winter comfort meal. Simmer your meat in red wine and load with veggies.



Pumpkin Soup

Nothing will warm the heart more than a classic Pumpkin Soup on a cold wintery day. Perhaps pack some bread, then enjoy the smooth soupy goodness from your Thermos.

Hakuna Frittata to Ease Your Worries

Willow Berry

The simple things in life are often the best things and when it comes to Frittata there are no exceptions. This egg-based Italian dish is a quiche without the carbs, it's easy to make and super practical.

When it comes to Frittatas - there are no worries. Both tasty and nourishing, this meal can be had whenever, wherever. Be it for breakfast, lunch or dinner, ingredients are of your choosing, and if you have leftovers you can save them for later.

A good Frittata doesn't need to follow a scripted recipe, some have even coined it as the end of week 'clean out the fridge' meal. Frittatas are simply beaten eggs combined with vegetables, meat, and dairy products, (or whatever fillings you prefer), then cooked either on the stove, in the oven, or both.

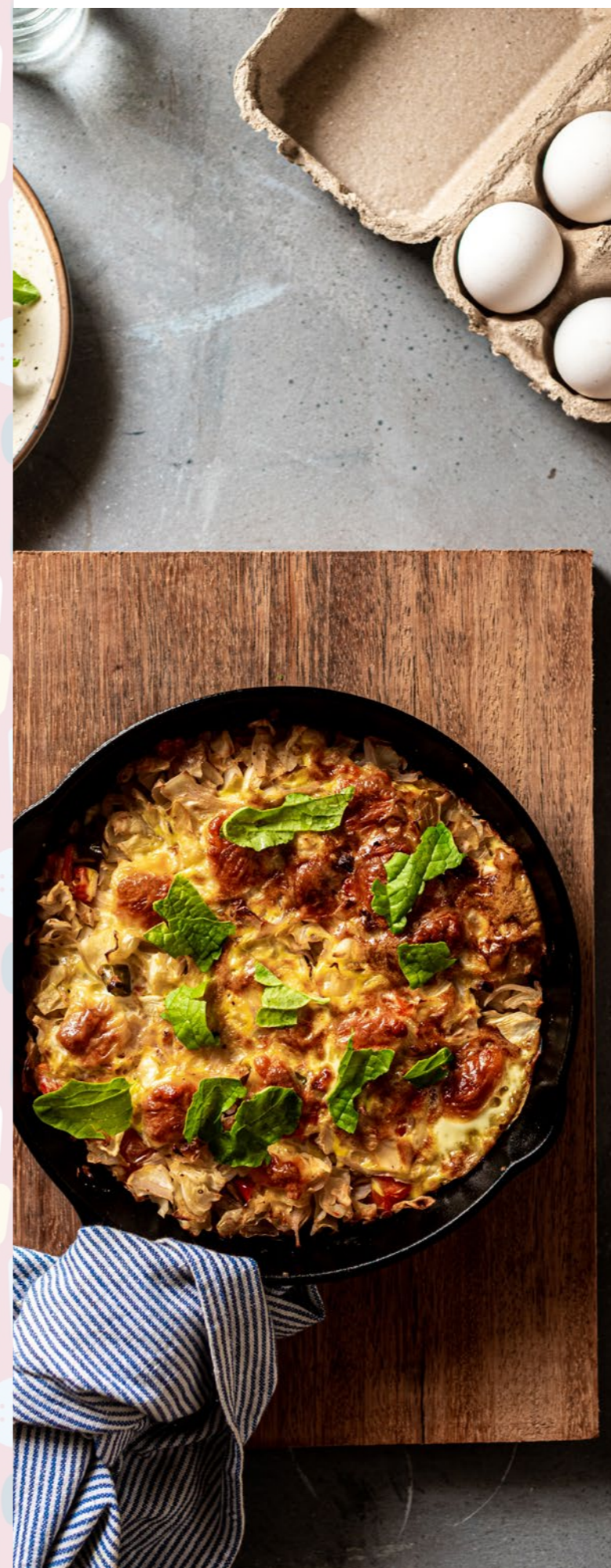
Here is one of my favourite ways to have a Frittata;

Ingredients

- 6-8 Eggs
- ½ cup milk (give or take depending on egg mix)
- Cheese, and/or Feta
- Ham, cubed
- Spinach
- Pumpkin and/or Sweet potato, peeled and sliced
- Capsicum, sliced
- Red onion, sliced
- Spices of your choice
- 2 tbs olive oil
- Mixed salad leaves or toasted sourdough, to serve

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C. Line a large baking tray with baking paper.
2. Place pumpkin, sweet potato, capsicum, onion, and olive oil in a large bowl, and toss to coat. Spread onto the prepared tray and roast for 25-30 minutes, or until just tender. Allow to cool slightly.
3. Meanwhile, whisk together egg and milk, then season with spices.
4. Get another tray lined with baking paper and add all the ingredients.
5. Pour egg mixture over the top. Bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes, or until golden and just set.
6. Allow to cool for 10 minutes before dividing among plates, and serving with mixed salad leaves and toasted sourdough bread.





whatson.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

Tina Turner Musical

Tina Turner didn't just break the rules, she rewrote them and now you can experience her triumphant story live on stage. "Tina - The Tina Turner Musical" is now playing to standing ovations at Theatre Royal Sydney!

This must-see new musical has audiences captivated, telling the incredible life story of Tina Turner, from her humble beginnings to global superstardom. Featuring electrifying performances and Tina's unforgettable music, including iconic songs such as, "Simply The Best", "What's Love Got To Do With It", and "Proud Mary", TINA - The Tina Turner Musical is not to be missed!

When: Every Wednesday to Sunday, until 22 October.

Where: Theatre Royal Sydney, 108 King Street, Sydney 2000.

Cost: \$69 +BF.

Contact: More information on whatson.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au.

Morning River Walk with 'Bush to Bowl'

Join Anthony, the lead harvest collector from Sydney bushfood farm, 'Bush to Bowl'. Anthony is a Wiradjuri man from Brungle NSW, he will share stories about specific plants and caring for Country. The group will explore the bushland edge of the beautiful Lane Cove River and consider its immense value for the Gamaragal People and other nearby Clans. The walk will involve some steep bush stairs and uneven sections, please bring water and a hat.

When: Wed, 14 June, 9:45am-11:30am.

Where: Mowbray Park. Meet in the Rotary Athletics Field car park, western end of Mowbray Road, Lane Cove North, 2066.

Cost: Free.

Contact: . Emma Hayes, 02 9777 7942, emma.hayes@willoughby.nsw.gov.au.



krq.nsw.gov.au

St Ives Playgroup and MyTime Support Group

The weekly playgroup will operate during school terms for children aged 0-6 years who have complex health needs, disabilities or other long-term medical conditions. Specialist staff and volunteers will host the playgroup, providing a welcoming and supportive learning environment.

When: All Mondays from June, 9:30am - 11am.

Where: 1A Acron Road, St Ives.

Cost: Free.

Contact: EarlyEd, 9923 2727.



krq.nsw.gov.au

Nature Play Preschoolers

Encourage your little ones to love nature by exploring it in a safe and expertly guided way at the wonderful Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden. There is a variety of events such as Native Bee Discovery, Wombat Stew, Aunty Time and much more. The Naure Play is dedicated for 3 to 5 years old children. Spaces are limited, so booking is essential.

When: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 10am - 11:30am.

Where: Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden, 420 Mona Vale Road, St Ives, 2075.

Cost: \$20, parent/carer admitted free of charge.

Contact: Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden, 02 9424 0353, kwg@krq.nsw.gov.au.



willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Kids Create at Artarmon Library

Join the community on a creative day at Artarmon Library. Kids Create is craft for 5-9 years olds and their families. Remember that all kids must be supervised by someone over 18 at all times in the library.

When: Tuesday, 13, 3:30pm - 4:30pm .

Where: 2 Artarmon Library, 139 Artarmon Road, Artarmon, 2064.

Cost: Free.

Contact: Willoughby City Library at 02 9777 7900



Me-Gal X Wild Lights

With a strong focus on caring for Country and driving change, this year's Wild Lights will debut a variety of new breathtaking lanterns that shine a light on some of the country's most iconic species and the landscapes they call home. Guests with a booked reservation at Me-Gal during the evening dates of the Wild Lights activation will receive a 10% discount code in their booking confirmation to utilise when booking Wild Lights tickets.

When: Every day, 12pm to 7:30pm, until 17 June.

Where: 2a Bradleys Head Rd, Mosman NSW 2088.

Cost: Starting from \$14.

Contact: More information at 02 8021 7636 and www.megal-mosman.com.au.

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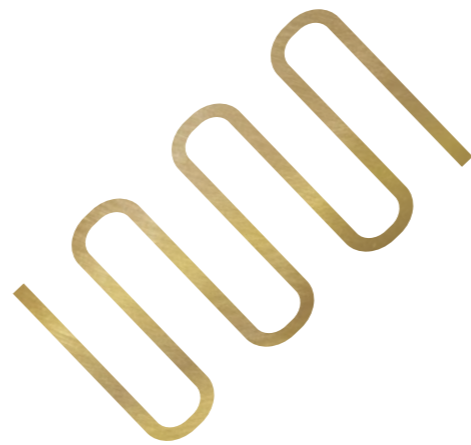
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