



FREE LOCAL NEWSPAPER

# BARRABA COMMUNITY NEWS

COMMUNITY OWNED AND EDITED

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

**MY NEW YEAR'S  
RESOLUTION IS SIMPLY**



**TO REMEMBER TO  
WRITE 2024  
INSTEAD OF 2023.**



**Phone: 0459 192 265**

Email: [admin@barrabaveterinaryservice.com](mailto:admin@barrabaveterinaryservice.com)

219 Mulwarree Rd, Barraba 2347

Mon to Fri 8:30am – 5.30pm

Closed from 1-2pm

**After Hours service available for emergencies  
only.**

Offering veterinary services within the Barraba district for small and large animals in clinic or on farm. Cat & Dog Boarding available for short or long-term stays.

## **“STEPPING ON” - FALLS PREVENTION PROGRAM**

**Free community program for seniors, men and  
women – enrol now!**

This is a fun program for over sixty-fives designed to keep you active, improve your strength and balance and keep you independent as you age. Run by Deb Cunningham from Tamworth Community Health Centre, it runs for just two hours on a Monday morning for seven weeks.

The sessions combine gentle exercise, and really interesting input from a physiotherapist, an occupational therapist, a podiatrist, and a pharmacist.

Deb has run this program over the past two years with great success at Manilla, Nundle and Werris Creek. The Werris Creek program had twenty-two keen participants and was so popular that they have demanded Deb come back again! It is now Barraba's turn:

**WHEN:** Monday mornings

12 February to 25 March 2024, 10am to 12noon

**WHERE:** Barraba Bowling Club

**COST:** Free (morning tea provided)

**REGISTER:** Deb Cunningham 1800 881 568

Phone Deb straight away – you must register if you would like to attend. There needs to be twelve people registered or the program will be cancelled. That would be a great pity if Barraba missed out on this really worthwhile program.





#### Tamworth Regional Council Pensioner and Hardship rebate 10 January 2024

As part of our ongoing communication around the special rate variation proposal, we wanted to share more information about our [pensioner rebates and hardship policies](#) which were on public exhibition in December and January. These policies were reviewed in response to feedback received during the community consultation period, recognising the need for adequate financial assistance options.

Our Councillors agreed to increase the rebate for ratepayers who receive an Australian Government pension/income support payment. The rebate will be \$50 in addition to the State Government Funded existing rebate in the first year if a Special Rate Variation is approved and enacted, and \$100 in the second year of the Special Variation and continue ongoing.

This has been formalised in our Ratepayers Pensioner Policy, which outlines the additional options for support and flexibility for eligible pensioners with regards to property debt incurred for their principal place of living.

The other document that has been on public exhibition is the [Ratepayers Hardship Policy](#), which is to ensure equity to all ratepayers whilst assisting those experiencing financial hardship, and to ensure property debt is reduced consistently over time.

The intention is to encourage those facing hardship to reach out to our staff so they can try and find flexibility to accommodate individual circumstances.

Now the exhibition period has closed, Councillors will review any feedback and formally adopt the policies at an upcoming meeting.







*Welcome to*  
**Barraba RSL**  
and Recreation Club

### **BARRABA RSL & RECREATIONAL CLUB LTD**

Phone 67821379

For the information of members and guests.

#### **THIS WEEK**

#### **FRIDAY 19th January**

MEAT RAFFLES

1st Draw 6.45pm

2nd Draw 7.30pm

MEMBERSHIP DRAW \$1700

#### **Sunday 21st January**

Angler Club raffles from 1pm

Membership Draw \$1200

#### **HAPPENING SOON**

FRIDAY 26TH Jan LIVE MUSIC FROM 7PM

SUNDAY 18TH Feb CLUB AGM STARTING 11AM

#### **BISTRO HOURS**

Phone 0427330808

DINE IN OR TAKEAWAY

DAILY BLACKBOARD SPECIALS AVAILABLE

ALSO PIZZAS MADE TO ORDER

MONDAY: CLOSED

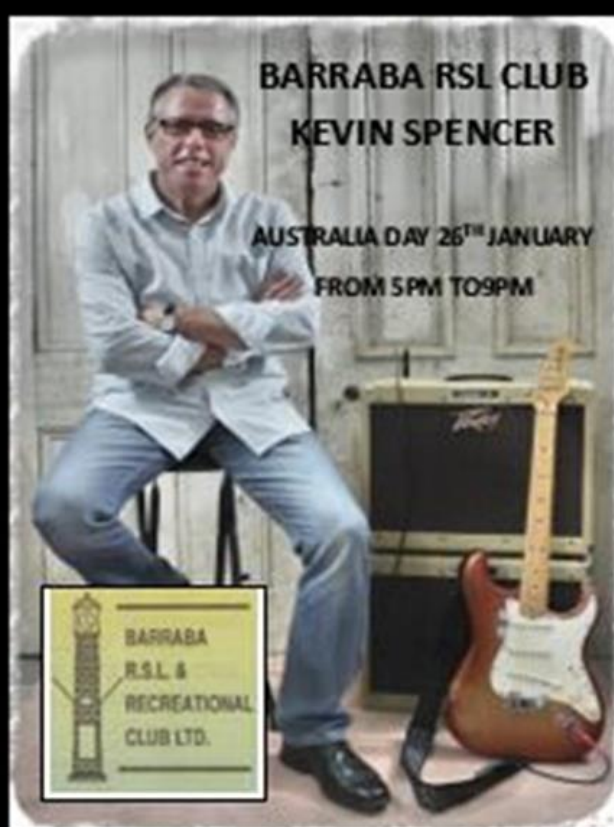
TUESDAY: CLOSED

WEDNESDAY: 12PM-2.00PM

THURS/FRI/SAT: LUNCH 12-2PM

DINNER FROM 6PM

SUNDAY: 12-2PM



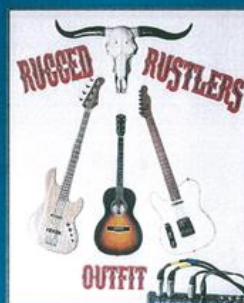
## **Upper Horton Sports Club**

7.00pm Start

Saturday 27th January 2024

22 Cobbadah Street, Upper Horton

02 6782 7249



A TASMA Promotion

For further information call TASMA Secretary  
Don Garrad 0498 046 754



*Welcome to*  
**Barraba RSL**  
and Recreation Club

### **Notice of Annual General Meeting**

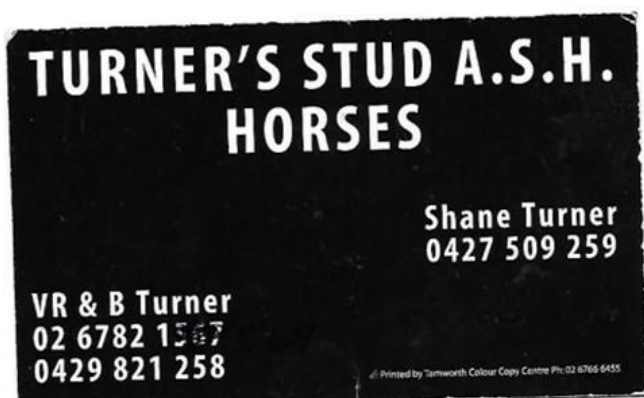
Of the Barraba RSL & Recreational Club Ltd

To be held Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> FEB 2024 @ 11am

@ the clubhouse

## Rugged Rustlers Outfit!

Michael Clare, a country school teacher for some twenty or so years, Michael has lived in many country towns. His experiences giving him the inspiration for his song writing. Michaels songs have been recorded by many artists including Brian Letton, Reg Poole, Greg Bain and Trevor Day. Encouraged by friends and family Michael began performing his originals in 2016. In 2017 he won the "Gidgee Coal Best New Talent", "The Manilla Talent Quest" and the TSA Best Comedy Song of the Year. Michael's lyrics are genuinely poetic and characterised by genuine warmth, some dryly observed observations about Australian life with plenty of good old down to earth Aussie humour. Michael has released several albums with more to follow.



48 Gotha Street, Barraba  
8:30am Saturday, 20 January 2024

## SENIORS ARE TOPS – NOMINATE SOMEONE TODAY!

Residents of the Tamworth electorate are encouraged to celebrate the positive impact our seniors make in our community, by nominating them for a 2024 NSW Seniors Festival Local Achievement Awards. Member for Tamworth Kevin Anderson MP said the 2024 NSW Seniors Festival would be held from 11-24 March, and now is the time to nominate those who deserved to be recognised as part of the awards.

"Communities right across our region are what they are due to the outstanding contributions of our local seniors," Mr Anderson said. "Whether it's the countless hours they spend volunteering across a range of organisations, their tireless advocacy, or the contributions they have made in their professional careers, I know our seniors are an invaluable part of our community. It's only right that we recognise the positive impact they have made on our communities through the Seniors Festival Local Achievement Awards."

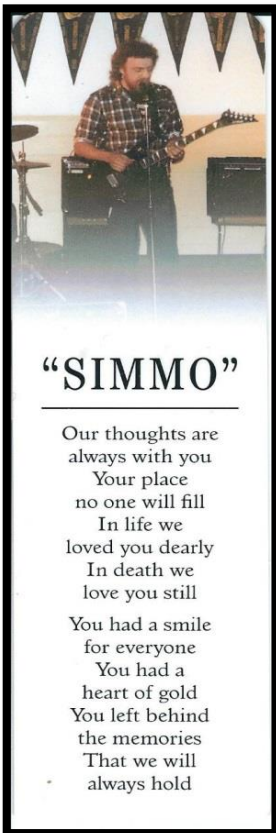
Nominations are now open for the awards program, one of a range of initiatives the NSW Government promotes to keep our seniors living happy, healthy and active lives. Winners of the Local Achievement Awards will be announced during the 2024 NSW Seniors Festival, 11-24 March.

"By highlighting the contributions of our local seniors, we keep them connected to our community, ensuring that we do everything we can to battle the social isolation that seniors can face. I thank seniors in our electorate for their outstanding contributions and look forward to seeing our local seniors recognised as part of the 2024 NSW Seniors Festival." For more information about NSW Seniors Festival and the Local Achievement Awards, visit [www.seniorsfestival.nsw.gov.au](http://www.seniorsfestival.nsw.gov.au)

If you drive a Subaru backward, what are you?  
U r a bus.



Vale Simon Aquilina (Simms)  
aged 58 yrs



Simon, dearly loved only son of Diana Simms and stepson of Karl Letzner, died suddenly of heart failure at his home in South Australia 9/11/2023. In the 1980s Simon lived on and off with his parents in the Horton valley. He played cricket for the Upper Horton Cricket Club and was invited as guest singer and guitarist to perform on occasion at the Upper Horton Club. In 1987 – 1988 Simon lived with his father Reno in London. During the day he worked for his father renovating mews cottages and by night he sang and played electric guitar at many London venues with a group of Aussie musicians. When he returned to Australia he formed a classic rock band in Adelaide and named the group of which he was lead singer and electric guitarist 'OLD NO. 7'. In 2010, Simon worked for Diana & Karl at Barraba Rural Traders for 12 months, keeping the customers entertained with his friendly quick wit and keen sense of humour. On returning to Adelaide he was employed for many years as a diesel mechanic and had recently been promoted to workshop manager. Simon was also a skilled online race car and multi gaming competitor. He had a great love of motor bikes, owning 4 or 5 bikes from a very early age, his favourite and most recent being a Triumph Daytona. Simon passed away suddenly after signing off for the night from his online gaming friends. He is survived and sadly missed by Diana, Karl, sister Michelle, Reno, Uncles and Aunt, cousins, his employers and work mates, 'OLD No.7' band members, and his online gaming and Facebook friends.

Simon's Face book page is still active and being managed by Michelle. Simon's funeral service was held at Centennial Park Adelaide on 28/11/2023 and is still available to watch online by contacting Diana Ph 67 821 647 for a pin number.

*See additional photo next page*



## James Roy Milne 96 years of age

Passed away peacefully surrounded by loving family on Thursday 4th January 2024. Beloved husband of 71 years to Margaret. Loving father and father-in-law of Judy & Michael, Lesley & Graham, Jim & Tina. Treasured Pa of Christopher & Shannon, Ben & Jess, Richard & Sarah, Annette & Mark, Felicity & Will and Jonathan & Angela. Great Pa to fifteen great grandchildren.

### "HAVE I BEEN DOWN THIS ROAD BEFORE?"

Relatives and friends are invited to attend a celebration of Roy's life at **Holy Trinity Church, Bathurst on Friday 19th January 2024 at 11:00am.**



## Thank you

My dad Mark Scarlett was called home to heaven in early December.

I wish to acknowledge and thank Barraba Funerals and the Barraba RSL for the respect and care shown to dad.

I found the necessity of planning dad's funeral a celebration of his life. Thank you, Gavin.

The team at the Barraba RSL were caring and a blessing to my brother as he planned the wake. Thank you all.

The Barraba Motel were flexible and sensitive to the changing needs and wants of my family. Thank you, Peter and Wendy.

St Lawrence Church were Christ like in the service planning. Thank you, Matt

To the entire Barraba community, I give my heartfelt thanks for the joy you gave my dad Mark in the last years of his life.

Forever thanking God for such an amazing community

Dale Hamilton

## Thank you

I moved to Barraba 2 weeks ago and basically had to camp in my new home without furniture. I have been overwhelmed by the support and kindness of the Barraba community during a difficult couple of weeks. In particular I would like to thank Pat Penna, Ian Maddison and Rachel and Jo from the 2<sup>nd</sup> hand shop who have been wonderful and welcoming helpers.

Kenneth Monk



## History Notes

by Terry Threlfall

*Substituting for Margaret Currell for a week or two, I thought I would do some Barraba "Car Stories".*

*First, I spoke to Ron Hiscock – here's a bit of his story.*

*Thank you, Ron for sharing with us.*

Ron, who turned ninety last year, became a mechanic because of a toothache!

In 1955, Ron was working as a farmhand on "The Oaks", the McKid property. "Archie McKid was a hard taskmaster," Ron told me. Ron was allocated a small room at the back of the main house; he was aroused before daylight to bring in and milk the cows and his work day often went to after dark. "My life was made a little easier by Mr McKid's two unmarried sisters," Ron said. They also lived at The Oaks; they would save helpings of dessert and homemade cakes and biscuits for him to eat after work.

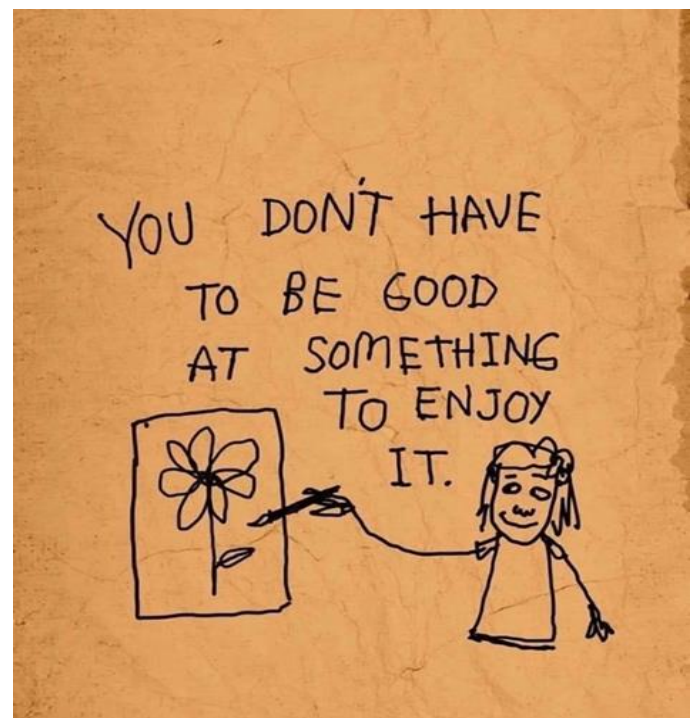
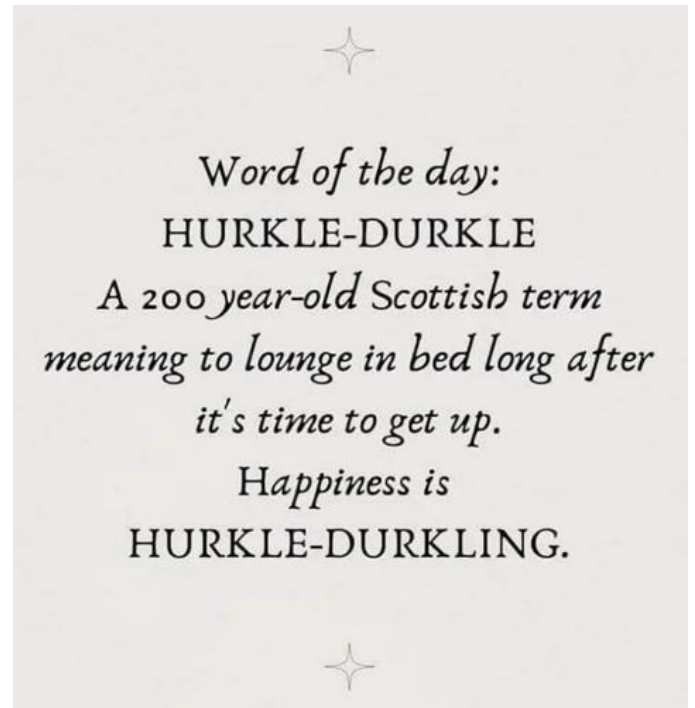
One Tuesday evening, after he finished work about 6 pm, Ron decided he would go to the movies (the Empire Theatre was in full swing then) in Barraba. He hopped on his push bike, rode into Barraba, and settled in the theatre with a bag of sweets. "Ouch" – Ron shot out of his canvas chair, the pain in one of his teeth excruciating. He went to spend the night at his parents' house; none of the cures his mother or his uncle tried helped. Next day Ron was up very early to pedal back to work. His mother took one look at his swollen face and said "You can't go to work like that; you must go to the dentist," and walked around to Mr Pringle the dentist's place. Ron was told to front up at 8.15 am, at which point Mr Pringle put his knee on Ron's chest and yanked out the offending tooth.

Ron then hopped on his bike and pedalled back to The Oaks. It was after 9 am when he arrived. Mr McKid was furious – where had he been when there was urgent work to be done? Ron tried to explain, but it was useless. The young Ron had had enough of that job; he went into his quarters, picked up his belongings, strapped them on his bike, and rode off with a "I'm finishing up now" leaving behind a protesting Mr McKid.

When Ron got home, he was filled with dread – he now had no job; what would he tell his father? It was Wednesday – his father would be back on Saturday afternoon. He looked through the pages of the latest Barraba Chronicle – there was an advertisement placed by White's Garage: "Wanted – a Bowser Boy"! Ron fronted up first thing next morning;

Scotty White, the Proprietor, asked him his name, surmised he was one of the local Hiscock lads, and told him he could start next day. So, Ron was able to tell his father when he arrived home on Saturday that he had left his employment with the McKids but he now had another job.

*Car stories from the 1950s and 1960s to follow. Do you have stories about cars in those days? We would love to hear them – write to or email The Editor, Barraba Community News.*



## BARRABA UNITING CHURCH NOTICES

Sunday 21st January 8.45am.

All welcome

## ANGLICAN CHURCH TIMES

**St Laurence's Barraba**

Sunday service at 10.00am

Woodsreef 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month at 11.30am

## CATHOLIC CHURCH TIMES

Barraba 1st Saturday evening Mass 6pm

2nd 3rd 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday 9am

Upper Horton 11am on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday

Weekday Mass Wednesday 10am

## BARRABA COMMUNITY NEWS

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## TAMWORTH COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL – FREE CONCERTS AT TOYOTA PARK

Feeling the heat? Must be nearly January which of course means it's Toyota Country Music Festival time! Be in the know and stay across what's on. Toyota Park will have free concerts each night of Festival, and the lineup is now live so you can start planning!

Country music fans will have the opportunity to experience 10-days of FREE entertainment at the 2024 Toyota Country Music Festival, Tamworth, with some of the nation's top country stars and emerging talent taking to the stage across multiple venues at the 52<sup>nd</sup> event.

The 2024 festival will officially kick off on Friday, 19 January with the Opening Concert in Toyota Park – the festival's largest and loudest venue. Artists taking to the stage for the Opening Concert include 2023 Toyota Golden Guitar Female Artist of the Year **Amber Lawrence**, 2023 Toyota Golden

Guitar Male Artist of the Year **Andrew Swift**, 2023 Toyota Golden Guitar winners **Lyn Bowtell** and **Luke O'Shea**, 2023 Toyota Star Maker **Loren Ryan**, 2023 Golden Gig, Sponsored by Maccas winner **Caitlyn Jamieson** and 2023 Toyota Busking Champion **Lane Pittman**, who competed on The Voice 2022, and who recently toured with Luke Combs earlier this year. The night will also be compered by **Sam McClymont**, concluding with a fireworks display at 9.30pm.

Toyota Country Music Festival Manager, Barry Harley says the 52<sup>nd</sup> festival will be a truly unique live music experience for all those who attend. "The Toyota Country Music Festival is one of the only events in Australia that provides top-level live music for FREE for everyone to enjoy in addition to our many ticketed shows," he said. "In 2024, the nation's top country artists, as well as the best in emerging talent will feature in full line-ups across Toyota Park and Toyota FanZone, with multiple venues across the region also offering the best in live entertainment."

Toyota Australia Chief Marketing Officer, Vin Naidoo, said "The Tamworth Country Music Festival serves as a vibrant celebration of the heart and soul of rural and regional Australian communities and we are proud to be involved once again in 2024. The nightly free concerts at Toyota Park bring everyone together, fostering a sense of unity between the locals, performers and festivalgoers alike. Attendees can look forward to an exceptional roster of Australia's top country music artists, guaranteeing a variety of sensational free entertainment each evening."

More than 100 artists will take to the stage in Toyota Park across the 10-day festival including, one of the top Golden Guitar nominees for 2024 **Travis Collins**, two-time Golden Guitar winner **Aleyce Simmonds**, world-renowned rock legend **Andrew Farriss**, five-time Golden Guitar nominee **Jayne Denham**, multi-Golden Guitar winner **Kristy Cox**, three-piece sibling band **The Buckleys**, 2022 New Talent of the Year winners **Darlinghurst**, four-time Golden Guitar nominee **Allison Forbes**, the recently formed duo of **Catherine Britt** and **Lachlan Bryan – The Pleasures**, Western Australia's Indigenous group **Kimberley Gold**, the 2024 Toyota Star Maker Top 10, plus many, many more.

Several artists performing in Toyota Park will also feature on the Toyota FanZone stage giving festivalgoers a unique opportunity to see their favourite artists up close. Tamworth Country Music Festival is proudly supported by the NSW Government through its tourism and major events agency, Destination NSW. Stay up to date at [www.tcmf.com.au/news](http://www.tcmf.com.au/news), [TCMF Facebook](#) and [TCMF Instagram](#).



## Love scrambles the brain and scientists can now tell us why

Love is blind, the saying goes, and thanks to a world-first Australian study, we are now a step closer to understanding why. It is well known that romantic love changes the brain, releasing the so-called love hormone oxytocin, responsible for the euphoria we feel when falling in love.

Now, researchers from the ANU, University of Canberra and University of South Australia have measured how a part of the brain is responsible for putting our loved one on a pedestal in that first flush of romance. In the world's first study investigating the link between the human brain's behavioural activation system (BAS) and romantic love, researchers surveyed 1556 young adults who identified as being "in love". The survey questions focused on the emotional reaction to their partner, their behaviour around them, and the focus they placed on their loved one above all else.

It turns out that when we are in love, our brain reacts differently. It makes the object of our affections the centre of our lives. ANU lead researcher and PhD student Adam Bode says the study – recently published in the journal *Behavioural Sciences* – sheds light on the mechanisms that cause romantic love. "We actually know very little about the evolution of romantic love," Bode says. As a result, every finding that tells us about romantic love's evolution is an important piece of the puzzle that's just been started. It is thought that romantic love first emerged some five million years ago after we split from our ancestors, the great apes. We know the ancient Greeks philosophized about it a lot, recognising it both as an amazing as well as traumatic experience. The oldest poem ever to be recovered was in fact a love poem dated to around 2000 BC."

University of Canberra academic and UniSA Adjunct Associate Professor, Dr Phil Kavanagh, says the study shows that romantic love is linked to changes in behaviour as well as emotion. "We know the role that oxytocin plays in romantic love, because we get waves of it circulating throughout our nervous system and blood stream when we interact with loved ones," Dr Kavanagh says. "The way that loved ones take on special importance, however, is due to oxytocin combining with dopamine, a chemical that our brain releases during romantic love. Essentially, love activates pathways in the brain associated with positive feelings."

The next stage of the research involves investigating the differences between men and women in their approach to love, and a worldwide survey identifying four different types of romantic lovers.



## Department of Primary Industries Department of Regional NSW

The NSW Department of Primary Industries proudly announces the launch of *Genetics in the Paddock with Emily*, a podcast series set to demystify the complex world of livestock genetics.

The 10-part series welcomes a diverse line-up of guests from NSW DPI and Animal Genetics and Breeding Unit (AGBU), each sharing their expertise and insights into a range of compelling topics within the field of livestock genetics.

Hosted by NSW DPI Livestock Genetics Development Officer Emily Johnston, this series aims to simplify the complex science of livestock genetics, while offering a nuanced exploration of its profound impact on agriculture.

"Whether you're a seasoned producer, a curious consumer, or someone with a passion for science, this podcast is your go-to source for understanding how genetics is changing the way we breed livestock," Ms Johnston said.

"We discuss cutting-edge breeding techniques to exploring the genetic traits that make livestock more profitable, sustainable and productive."

Ms Johnston invites listeners to embark on this educational journey in order to better understand the pivotal role of genetics in transforming modern agriculture, and how they can apply their newfound knowledge to their own enterprises.

"For producers, making selection decisions based on the genetic potential of an animal can help accelerate genetic gain and is the cornerstone of profitability and sustainability," Ms Johnston said.

"But understanding how to leverage genetic tools in production can be overwhelming due to the complexity of it. With this podcast, my aim is to remove that barrier and provide listeners with the confidence to explore and utilise these tools effectively, in an easy to follow, conversational style."

*Genetics in the Paddock with Emily* is available on all major podcast platforms.

## New land values published for North West Regional NSW

The NSW Valuer General has published land values for the North West Regional NSW Region. The land values reflect the value of land only, as at 1 July 2023.

Land value is the value of the land only. It does not include the value of a home or other structure. Property sales are the most important factor valuers consider when determining land values.

The new land values will be used by Revenue NSW to calculate land tax for the 2024 land tax year for landowners that are subject to land tax.

Registered land tax clients will receive their land tax assessment from Revenue NSW from January 2024. More information on land tax can be found at [revenue.nsw.gov.au](https://revenue.nsw.gov.au).

The latest land values for all properties in NSW are available on the Valuer General NSW website, along with information on trends, medians and typical land values for each local government area.

Please visit [www.valuergeneral.nsw.gov.au](https://www.valuergeneral.nsw.gov.au) for more information on land values and the NSW valuation system.

### Total land values for the North West Regional NSW

Property type	01 Jul 2022	01 Jul 2023	% change	Property count
Residential	\$5,962,570,204	\$6,285,055,537	5.4%	42,509
Commercial	\$515,636,370	\$567,517,930	10.1%	1,811
Industrial	\$363,281,720	\$438,675,180	20.8%	1,186
Rural	\$27,577,287,941	\$34,150,335,400	23.8%	14,403
Other	\$1,489,828,350	\$1,536,692,810	3.2%	2,634
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$35,908,604,585</b>	<b>\$42,978,276,857</b>	<b>19.7%</b>	<b>62,543</b>

### North West NSW Region local government areas

Gunnedah, Gwydir, Liverpool Plains, Moree Plains, Narrabri, Tamworth Regional and Walgett.

### General overview

The total land value for the North-West region increased by 19.7% between 1 July 2022 and 1 July 2023 from approximately \$36 billion to \$43 billion.

Residential land values across the region experienced a moderate increase of 5.4%. The strong increase in Narrabri (22.1%) was attributable to growth in commercial and industrial sectors.

Commercial land values across the region experienced a strong increase of 10.1%. There were strong increases in Narrabri (14.3%) with good demand for local goods and services underpinned by mining and infrastructure projects and a continuing strong rural sector.

Industrial land values across the region experienced a strong increase of 20.8%. The very strong increase in Narrabri (86.9%) was driven by the expanding coal and gas mining industries, the Inland Rail Project which is currently under construction, and strong agricultural sector.

Rural land values across the region experienced a strong increase of 23.8%. The strongest increases in Walgett (61%) and Moree Plains (44.2%) were attributable to stronger demand for cultivation country given the stronger returns for cropping. In addition, a very wet season in late 2022 added to the appeal and presentation of properties in the more marginal rainfall areas across the region.

For more information, visit: [www.valuergeneral.nsw.gov.au](https://www.valuergeneral.nsw.gov.au)





The January Q3 Waste Vouchers are now available for residents to dispose of up to 2 cubic metres of non-recyclable bulky household waste for FREE (some limits apply).

Residents who are signed up to the digital service should see the voucher in their account automatically.

If you do not have a digital device to access your vouchers you can call Council customer service on 6767 5555.

For a full list of items you can dispose of for FREE with your voucher visit

<https://www.tamworth.nsw.gov.au/.../waste.../waste-vouchers>

#### WHAT DOES A WASTE VOUCHER ALLOW?

Residents are required to PRE-SORT their load into recyclable materials and other waste types. The waste voucher covers the bulky items to be recycled and the remaining landfill items that are within the permitted volumes and/or quantities.

- One voucher allows for you to dispose of up to 2 cubic meters of non-recyclable bulky household waste or listed items below that attract a charge and/or have capped limits.

- Domestic clean construction and demolition materials e.g. brick, tile and concrete (Clean means free of rubbish, soil, grass, wiring, plastic, timber or metal)

- Metal waste

- E-waste

- Community Recycling Centre items

- Green waste

- A maximum of 2 car/4WD/motorcycle tyres will be allowed per voucher. Any additional tyres will be charged the appropriate fee.

- A maximum of 1 mattress will be allowed per voucher (no matter what size). Any additional mattress will be charged the appropriate fee.

- A maximum of 2 solar panels will be allowed per

waste voucher. Any additional solar panels will be charged the appropriate fee.

#### WHAT DOESN'T A WASTE VOUCHER ALLOW?

- Vouchers CANNOT be used for disposal of Asbestos. A Waste Disposal Permit is required
- Vouchers CANNOT be used for Clean fill. A Waste Disposal Permit is required.
- Waste from a Commercial premises.
- Vouchers CANNOT be used for disposal of residential waste utilising a Skip bin service.

## Tamworth Regional Council meeting update – Tuesday 12 December 2023

**Editor's Note** – The report of this meeting is lengthy and we don't have space this week to publish it.

If you wish to read the report go to

[www.barrabacommunitynews.org.au](http://www.barrabacommunitynews.org.au) or

[www.tamworth.nsw.gov.au/businesspapers](http://www.tamworth.nsw.gov.au/businesspapers)

#### LIFE-SAVING DEFIBRILLATOR GRANT OPEN

The NSW Government's life-saving Local Sport Defibrillator Grant Program has returned, and local sport clubs and organisations are encouraged to apply for grants of up to \$3,000. Member for Tamworth Kevin Anderson said it was critically important that local sporting clubs and organisations were prepared for the unlikely scenario that a player, or a spectator goes into cardiac arrest.

"We love our sport, and it's great to travel around the region and see our sporting fields a hive of activity over the summer months," Mr Anderson said. "While we love our sport, we also know that strenuous activity can increase our risk of heart attack, which is why it's important that we are prepared. A defibrillator can be the difference between life and death because medical experts tell us that the first eight minutes following cardiac arrest are critical to saving a life. That's why I've always been a big supporter of the Local Sport Defibrillator Grant Program. In Tamworth, we know how critical these defibrillators can be after a life was saved on a local sporting field in 2016. It can happen to anyone, at any time, which is why I'm keen to see every sporting and recreation grounds have one on hand. If you're a local sporting club or organisation in need of a defibrillator, please get your applications in."

Applications for the Government's Local Sport Defibrillator Grant Program opened on 1 December 2023, and will close on 23 February 2024, or when the \$500,000 allocated to the program is exhausted.

For more information, visit

<https://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/grants/local-sport-defibrillator-grant-program>

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### **VETERANS COMPENSATION REFORM: MINISTER FAILS TO MEET ROYAL COMMISSION'S DEADLINE**

A major overhaul of veterans' entitlements has hit a roadblock with the Labor Government failing to meet the end-of-year deadline to release draft new laws to harmonise and consolidate compensation claims. The very first recommendation of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide had specifically directed the government that "by no later than 22 December 2023, the Australian Government should complete drafting of the legislation".

Former Deputy Prime Minister and Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Hon. Barnaby Joyce MP, said there were over 347,000 veterans and dependents who had been promised priority action by the government to deliver on the Royal Commission's recommendations. "The 22 December came and went, then the end of the year came and went; and there is still no sign of the draft new laws. The year ended badly and started no better for those who want

outcomes from the current government", Mr Joyce said. He said veterans' compensation entitlements were currently contained across three separate Acts often with different levels of assistance and eligibility.

"The former Coalition Government established the Royal Commission as we understood there was an urgent need to build confidence, trust and hope for current and future veterans and their families that they would be properly supported", Mr Joyce said. He said the Labor Government's inaction on their own commitment on veterans' reform was a direct result of veterans losing their voice at the Cabinet table where critical policy and funding decisions are made.

"The very first action of Mr Albanese when he became Prime Minister was to dump the Minister for Veterans Affairs from Cabinet. The position does not sit at the Cabinet table which means the Minister has to sit outside the door hoping someone in Cabinet will listen to him when trying to advocate for veterans", Mr Joyce said.

"We have no reason as to why the draft legislation has not been released and it has been close to a fortnight since it should have been, so I suppose we just have to put it down to incompetence" Mr Joyce said.

