



**FREE LOCAL NEWSPAPER**

# BARRABA COMMUNITY NEWS

COMMUNITY OWNED AND EDITED

**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025**



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

Phone 67821379  
For the information of  
members and guests.

### **THIS WEEK**

#### **THURSDAY 3rd July**

BINGO from 6pm

#### **FRIDAY 4th July**

#### **MEAT RAFFLES**

MEMBERSHIP DRAW \$1000

#### **SUNDAY 6th July**

#### **AIR COOLED ASSEMBLY RAFFLES**

Raffles on sale from 12pm, drawn 1.30pm

MEMBERSHIP DRAW \$1800

### **BISTRO HOURS**

**Phone 0427330808**

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**DAILY BLACKBOARD SPECIALS AVAILABLE**

**ALSO PIZZAS MADE TO ORDER**

**MONDAY/TUESDAY/WEDNESDAY: CLOSED**

**THURS/FRI/SAT: Lunch 12-2pm. Dinner from 6pm**

**SUNDAY: 12-2pm**

## **Community Spirit Lifts Richardson House**



Thanks to the incredible generosity and support of our local community, Richardson House is now home to a brand-new lifter—an addition that is already making a remarkable difference to the care we provide.

This lifter enhances the safety, comfort, and dignity of our residents while supporting staff in delivering the highest quality care. It's more than just equipment—it represents a shared commitment to compassion and community well-being.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who contributed to our fundraising efforts. Special thanks go to: Barraba Bowling Club and their Ladies, Barraba Bowling Club Fishing Club, Rachel & Faye at Opportunity Knocks and their helpers, Rhonda Sullivan and her helpers, Barraba Rotary Club, Barraba Senior Citizens, Richardson House Board and Staff and all who donated and helped in any way in our fundraising efforts.

Your kindness and support have helped bring this vision to life. This achievement is a powerful demonstration of what we can accomplish when we work together.

From all of us at Richardson House—**thank you.**

## **Medical Centre Surgery Closure**

**The Medical Centre will be closed from Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July to Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July and will reopen on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> July at 9.00am.**

If you require scripts please contact the surgery to make an appointment prior to the closure.

If you require medical attention during these dates, please present to the Barraba Hospital and in an emergency please ring 000 for an ambulance.

Medical Centre Management



# Thinking of selling?

Contact Us Today!



## Barraba



Sinclair Hughson  
0492 507 592



Chloe Payne  
0428 821 071



## Manilla

Tessa Archer  
0427 821 006



Katey Ramage  
0457 851 911





**Email or text  
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**150 Bulls**  
Queensland ready tick vaccinated  
**110 Peakes Angus**  
& **40 Poll**  
**Hereford Bulls**

# BOWEN

est. 1963

## POLL HEREFORD & PEAKES ANGUS

**30<sup>th</sup> Annual Bowen Bull Sale**  
17<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at 1pm  
[www.bowenstud.com.au](http://www.bowenstud.com.au)



Bulls can be inspected prior to sale by contacting the vendors. Videos will be available of all sale bulls on Auction Plus & Bowen Web pages

Stephen, Jodi, Nick & Josh Peake | Stephen 0427 821 756 | Nick 0428 564 515 | Josh 0455 614 884 | [admin@bowenstud.com.au](mailto:admin@bowenstud.com.au)



**Barraba Rugby Union  
Football Club**

**60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

**26<sup>th</sup> July 2025 - Barraba vs Quirindi**

The Barraba Rugby Club would like to invite all past players and supporters to our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary luncheon, at 11:30am for at 12pm start.

**Where - Barraba Rugby Club**  
**When - 26th July 2025 - 11:30am**  
**Cost - \$40**

Tickets can be purchased online at <https://www.trybooking.com/DCJCE>, by using the QR code below or by contacting Amie Middlemiss on 0409879093



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Barraba Community News,

I am requesting the following be printed as a letter to the editor:

I wish to correct one of the names listed in a Barraba Central School photograph which was published in last week's edition of your community news. There is a lovely photo of my dear departed older brother, Allan Good, in the sixth class of 1956...unfortunately he is listed as Kevin Good. I don't mind being recognised as my brother, however, to set the record straight, I did not attend school in Barraba. My brother, Allan, obviously did as did my dear departed younger sister, Jeanette.

Kind regards,  
Kevin Good

**Advertise in Barraba Community News  
and reach 750 households in our local  
area.**

**Contact**  
[news@barrabacommunitynews.org.au](mailto:news@barrabacommunitynews.org.au)  
**for the best advertising rates in the region**

## Barraba SES on the job

On Sunday evening, 22nd June, a call-out was issued to multiple SES units requesting assistance with a land search for a missing person in the area between Pilliga and Wee Waa.

5.30am the following morning saw 4 members from Barraba heading west and arriving just in time for the briefing, along with members from other SES units, as well as RFS and VRA volunteers, the whole being overseen by Police Rescue.

Of particular interest was the new Side by Side vehicle which is currently being trialled, and which proved to be invaluable in this challenging terrain.

We were appointed to one of the three search teams which searched the scrub in line formation, scrambling over and through the undergrowth while looking for clues.

The search was over by 11am, when we were called back in to the search base, after which our 4 tired volunteers were happy to pile back into the vehicle for the long drive home.

The next day we were most gratified to receive an email from the Deputy Zone Commander who heartily congratulated all who participated, saying that this was the largest land search which the North Western Zone has participated in since its inception, and that the sea of orange SES uniforms was impossible to miss. He also said that our dedication, teamwork and professionalism made a real difference and showcased the best of what we can achieve when we work together.



## Barraba Rotary: A Year of Dedication, Community Spirit, and Lasting Impact

As the Barraba Rotary Club reflects on the past 12 months, it's clear that our commitment to helping locals and supporting community efforts remains as strong as ever. Through countless hours of volunteered time, generous support from the community, and a spirit of collaboration, we're proud of what we've achieved together.

One of the highlights of the year was welcoming our exchange student, Wakana Nishimura, from Japan. Her placement was made possible through a joint sponsorship with Gunnedah Rotary and in partnership with Tamworth Rotary. Hosting Wakana has been a truly enriching experience for her and our community and a reminder of Rotary's global connections.

We continued our support of the **MHERV (Men's Health Education Rural Van)** and look forward to welcoming it again soon. This service plays a crucial role in providing vital health checks to rural men and women and saving lives.

Two **successful campdrafts** were held at Burindi—one in August and another in May—bringing riders and families together to celebrate our region's horsemanship skills. We are deeply grateful to **Paraway Pastoral Co. and the staff and management at Burindi** for allowing us to hold these events on their properties and for their behind-the-scenes help.

Our support for the arts included sponsoring the **'Works on Paper' exhibition** at Frost Over Barraba and lending a hand with the **street BBQ and creative workshops**. We also assisted the **Barraba Pony Club**, providing meals at their events and the **District Jamboree**.

When it comes to community events, Rotary was there—**managing gates for the Garden Ramble** (organised by the Cancer Ladies) and **helping out at the Barraba Show**. We also catered for a number of local favourites such as the **Christmas Tree celebration, Australia Day, and LLS Day**.

A new addition to the Rotary calendar this year was **'Muddy Mayhem'**, a fun-filled weekend of cars and mud. We were proud to be involved and handled the catering once again.

Among our ongoing projects is the **DM phone collection**, where people can donate old mobile phones to support victims of domestic violence. We're also proud to be part of a quiet but meaningful support initiative where **vouchers for the Barraba Beef Butcher and Saunders Fruit & Veg** are gifted to locals in need, distributed with care by the ladies at **Opportunity Knocks**.

Financially, the Barraba community has shown great generosity and trust in Rotary. We contributed to the **Air-**



**Cooled Assembly project**, including support toward a **shipping container**. We also sponsored high-achieving students to attend the **RYAG Sheep course in Walcha**, opening up new opportunities in agriculture.

Internationally, we donated to the **School of St Jude in Tanzania**, founded by Gemma Sisia. This incredible project has built schools and is now building a university to empower students through education.

Closer to home, we proudly supported **Richardson House**, providing funding for a new **chairlift** and four much-needed **special beds**. We also contributed to the **Queensland Flood Appeal**, the **Dolly Parton Imagination Library**, and **Operation Cleft**, helping improve lives through literacy and health care.

None of this would have been possible without the ongoing support of our community. To everyone who attended events, helped out, donated, or cheered us on—**thank you**. A special thanks goes to the **staff and management at Burindi**, whose support made our campdrafts possible.

The past 12 months have been a busy and rewarding time for our local Rotary Club, filled with meaningful community involvement, ongoing projects, and exciting new initiatives. With a strong commitment to helping locals and supporting community events, our members have proudly donated their time and energy to a wide range of causes across Barraba and beyond. With a few **new members** to the Rotary Club of Barraba we are excited for what the next 12 months will bring. With continued commitment, community spirit, and a passion for service, we look forward to another year of making a difference—together.



*L-R Retiring Treasurer, Ian McColl; Marina Hearne, Youth Exchange Coordinator; Returning President, Ian Cabot; Incoming Treasurer, Sarah Hamilton, Wakana Nishimura, Youth Exchange Student from Japan; Returning Secretary, Dave Penna.*



## History Notes

The notes last week on the Upper Horton village have raised some interest both about the school and the actual village history. We have an enquiry for a copy of the school centenary booklet published 42 years ago. It is a yellow coloured booklet with two photos on the cover - one depicts the early school building and the other a modern 1983 school. If anyone has a copy of this booklet that they no longer need, we have an Upper Horton descendant who would like it, just let the museum know or drop it in on a Friday morning.

The history of the Upper Horton village concerns almost the whole length of the Horton River from Kaputar to where it joins the Gwydir River near Elcombe. The river tends to be well known from where it enters the Horton Valley at the Horton Falls and winds down a widening valley, through miles of fertile slopes and plains to join the Gwydir on its way to the rich lands around Moree and beyond.

As mentioned last week, large areas of the Horton River plains were taken up by the early owners who paid managers to look after the stock. The Government Gazette in 1848 listed Currangandi, Pallal, Deradera, Rocky Creek, Ulumbarella, and Eulourie under names such as Cox, Lethbridge, Ogilvie, Pringle, Parnell but they rarely visited their property. It was in later years that families such as King, McDouall, Comber, Etheridge, Sharpe, Clayton, Carter, Caine, Spence, Goldthorpe and Jeffrey, began to appear in the old records and on the old maps.

These people needed the convenience of a village to supply food, mail etc. The roads out of the valley were very steep and rather dangerous - a trip to Barraba or Bingara in those early days also took many hours! The village started to be settled and there was great enthusiasm when the plan of the village was officially drawn up and a map produced - there were house blocks on both sides of the river and extending well beyond the present-day blocks!

It seems there was no actual cemetery at Upper Horton apart from the three now unmarked graves in a cultivation paddock. However, there are several private plots - the one beside the bridge being the most accessible and another just up the river in very real danger of falling into the river if it has not already done so.

### ANGLICAN CHURCH TIMES

St Laurence's Barraba

Sunday service at 10.00am

Woodsreef service 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in each month 11.30

### CATHOLIC CHURCH TIMES

Barraba 1st Sunday of the month, Saturday evening

Mass 5pm

All other Sundays 9am

### BARRABA UNITING CHURCH NOTICES

Sun 6<sup>th</sup> July Service at Barraba at 10.45am.

All Welcome

Thank You

*The family of the late Mrs Veronica Taylor wish to pass on our gratitude for all the beautiful floral tributes, phone calls, cards and messages of condolence after the loss of our wonderful Mum.*

*Please accept this as personal.*

*Mum was the most caring, thoughtful and community minded person and I'm sure she would have been thrilled in her own modest way.*

*Robert, Elizabeth and Simone and families.*

### BARRABA COMMUNITY NEWS

COMMUNITY OWNED AND EDITED

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\* JADE HURLEY \* LITTLE PATTIE \*  
\* DIGGER REVELL \* LUCKY STARR \* DINAH LEE \*



THE GOOD OLD DAYS OF  
Rock 'n' Roll

\*\*\* This is not a tribute show. This is the real deal! \*\*\*

Saturday 30 Aug | 2:00PM  
TAMWORTH TOWN HALL

Presented by 3 Legends in Concert

LITTLE PATTIE – DIGGER REVELLE – JADE HURLEY – DINAH LEE and LUCKY STARR

Pioneers of the Australian Rock 'n' Roll era join together for the first time in over 60 years in an exciting and memory riddled show, **THE GOOD OLD DAYS OF ROCK 'N' ROLL**.

From television shows including Johnny O'Keefe's **SIX O'CLOCK ROCK** and Brian Henderson's **BANDSTAND**, so many talented performers and recording stars were born.

This **WONDERFUL REVIEW OF MEMORIES** from those days is the "cream of the crop" who have survived over 70 years of continuous performing and who, between them, have recorded dozens of hits which they will perform as only each performer can, taking every member of the audience back in time to where it all started.

In the **GOOD OLD DAYS OF ROCK 'N' ROLL**, you will re-live all the **FABULOUS ORIGINAL HITS** from the **HIT MAKERS** themselves **LITTLE PATTIE, DIGGER REVELLE, JADE HURLEY, DINAH LEE** and **LUCKY STARR**.

Memories of  
**Slim**  
Concert



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Presented by:  
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The Crosby Sisters  
Brian Letton  
Ashley Cook  
Greg Bain  
Shazza Leigh  
Col Thomson  
Anthony Baxter  
The Butler Showband

HATS OFF TO COUNTRY  
TAMWORTH 2025  
Fri 11 - Sun 13 JULY

## **Scammers targeting older Australians, Bendigo**

### **Bank warns**

Bendigo Bank is issuing a warning that scammers may be targeting older Australians in fake term deposit scams. Head of Customer and Threat Protection at Bendigo Bank, Jason Gordon, says scammers are impersonating legitimate financial services businesses, with criminals offering fake investment opportunities in an attempt to lure would-be investors; and in particular those aged 65 and older; to transfer large sums of money to scammers.

“Term deposits are regarded as conservative and secure investment options. Scammers know this and try to leverage the risk profile of these investments for their own ends with fake investment opportunities that redirect your funds to their own bank account,” says Mr Gordon. “Australians lose more to investment scams than any other scam type and retirees and those approaching retirement are often a target for term deposit scams and other kinds of investment scams,” he says.

“Scamwatch says that many Australians aged 65 and older have retired and may be seeking investment opportunities, which may explain people in this age group reporting total losses to investment scams of \$66.6 million last year. Australians aged 65 and over had the highest overall reported losses to Scamwatch of \$99.6 million – almost one third of all losses reported last year. This cohort only makes up less than 20% of the population, so these disproportionate losses tell us that this is a targeted demographic, and that those over 65 should be extra cautious.”

### **How are scammers targeting older Australians?**

“A common way for scammers to capture contact information is through phony online advertisements promoting fake term deposits. By engaging with these advertisements on social media, through online chat interactions or by processing payments online, scammers can collect your details and make you a target,” Mr Gordon says.

“Data breaches impacting companies that hold your personal information are another way your information can fall into the hands of scammers. Once they have your information, you may be contacted directly by the scammers, sometimes repeatedly and over prolonged periods of time, as they set up and execute the scam,” he says.

### **Warning signs of a term deposit scam**

Mr Gordon says these scams are often highly sophisticated and can resemble genuine offers from trusted organisations, but here are some signs it may be a scam:

#### **1. Implausibly high returns**

Fake term deposit or investment opportunities will often come with implausibly high interest rates, promised returns or guarantees. Always be sceptical if the offer is too good to be true and is markedly different to what reputable and reliable sources are able to offer.

#### **2. Cold outreach or unexpected contact**

Phone calls, emails or SMSs claiming to be from a financial services business should be treated with extreme caution – especially if you haven’t dealt with them before.

#### **3. A lack of digital footprint**

Scammers deliberately impersonate businesses without much of an online presence to limit consumers’ ability to compare their ‘real’ website with the scammers’ fake one.

#### **4. Mismatched details of the receiving bank account**

Any account you are transferring to should be in the same name of the relevant financial services business.

#### **5. Time sensitive offer to ‘invest now’**

Pressure to act quickly, often using phrases like “last chance” or “exclusive opportunity.”

### **How to stay protected**

Mr Gordon says that scams are becoming more sophisticated, but there are ways we can act to protect ourselves and our loved ones. “Never click on links in unsolicited emails or messages about financial products. Bendigo Bank has removed all links from SMS messages, so customers who receive an SMS that includes a link should treat that as suspicious,” Mr Gordon says. “We urge Australians to treat all unsolicited contact regarding investment opportunities as suspicious and do your own research or ask a friend or family member to help you look into the opportunity before you act,” he says.

Bendigo Bank offers face-to-face education approach to help its customers and the community safely navigate digital banking. The 30-minute, standardised classes for customers and local community groups highlight the benefits and importance of getting digitally connected, staying safe and recognising and preventing scams and fraud. Customers are encouraged to enquire at their local Bendigo Bank.

### **What to do if you’ve been scammed**

Mr Gordon’s advice to customers who may have fallen victim to a term deposit or investment scam is to visit [www.bendigobank.com.au/security](http://www.bendigobank.com.au/security) immediately to report it and get support. “Encouragingly, people aged 65 and over were the most likely to report a scam in 2024, with more than 62,000 reports lodged to Scamwatch. Reporting scams is critical in helping telcos, internet service providers, banks and law enforcement put a stop to criminal activity,” Mr Gordon says.

## **Barraba - Rural North**

**The 2024 Estimated Resident Population for Barraba - Rural North is 1,642, with a population density of 0.83 persons per square km.**

### **Location and boundaries**

Barraba - Rural North is located in the far north of the Tamworth Regional Council area. Barraba - Rural North is bounded by Gwydir Shire in the north, Uralla Shire in the east, the localities of Warrabah, Namoi River, Upper Manilla and Borah Creek in the south, and Narrabri Shire in the west.

**Population 1642      Land area 1989 square kms      Population density 0.83 person/sq km**

**In 2021, the largest age group in Barraba - Rural North was 60 to 64 year olds. The group that changed the most since 2016 was 75 to 79 year olds, decreasing by 29 people.**

The Age Structure of Barraba - Rural North provides key insights into the level of demand for age based services and facilities such as child care. It is also an indicator of Barraba - Rural North's residential role and function and how it is likely to change in the future.

Five year age groups present a classic age profile of the population. Each age group covers exactly five years, which enables direct comparison between each group.

| <b>Age structure - Five year age groups</b>                    |               |              |                                    |               |              |                                    |                     |
|--|---------------|--------------|------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Barraba - Rural North - Total persons (Usual residence)</b> | <b>2021</b>   |              |                                    | <b>2016</b>   |              |                                    | <b>Change</b>       |
| <b>Five year age groups (years)</b>                            | <b>Number</b> | <b>%</b>     | <b>Tamworth Regional Council %</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>%</b>     | <b>Tamworth Regional Council %</b> | <b>2016 to 2021</b> |
| 0 to 4   | 55            | 3.5          | 6.1                                | 78            | 4.9          | 6.5                                | -24                 |
| 5 to 9   | 85            | 5.4          | 6.9                                | 84            | 5.2          | 6.9                                | +1                  |
| 10 to 14   | 80            | 5.1          | 7.2                                | 61            | 3.8          | 6.8                                | +19                 |
| 15 to 19   | 60            | 3.8          | 6.5                                | 67            | 4.2          | 6.3                                | -7                  |
| 20 to 24   | 37            | 2.4          | 5.3                                | 40            | 2.5          | 5.4                                | -3                  |
| 25 to 29   | 48            | 3.1          | 6.2                                | 66            | 4.1          | 6.1                                | -18                 |
| 30 to 34   | 68            | 4.4          | 6.4                                | 65            | 4.1          | 6.0                                | +2                  |
| 35 to 39   | 73            | 4.7          | 6.1                                | 46            | 2.9          | 5.6                                | +27                 |
| 40 to 44   | 48            | 3.1          | 5.6                                | 67            | 4.2          | 6.1                                | -19                 |
| 45 to 49   | 70            | 4.5          | 5.9                                | 69            | 4.3          | 6.4                                | +1                  |
| 50 to 54   | 113           | 7.2          | 6.0                                | 129           | 8.1          | 6.4                                | -17                 |
| 55 to 59   | 124           | 7.9          | 6.0                                | 129           | 8.1          | 6.6                                | -5                  |
| 60 to 64   | 154           | 9.9          | 6.1                                | 143           | 9.0          | 6.3                                | +10                 |
| 65 to 69   | 141           | 9.0          | 5.6                                | 146           | 9.2          | 5.8                                | -6                  |
| 70 to 74   | 128           | 8.2          | 5.1                                | 133           | 8.3          | 4.6                                | -5                  |
| 75 to 79   | 105           | 6.7          | 3.8                                | 134           | 8.4          | 3.6                                | -29                 |
| 80 to 84   | 106           | 6.8          | 2.8                                | 79            | 4.9          | 2.4                                | +27                 |
| 85 and over  | 67            | 4.3          | 2.5                                | 62            | 3.9          | 2.4                                | +5                  |
| <b>Total population</b>  | <b>1,562</b>  | <b>100.0</b> | <b>100.0</b>                       | <b>1,606</b>  | <b>100.0</b> | <b>100.0</b>                       | <b>-44</b>          |



In Barraba - Rural North, 13.2% of households were made up of couples with children in 2021, compared with 24.7% in Tamworth Regional Council.

## Household type

| Barraba - Rural North - Total households (Enumerated) |  | 2021   |                             |
|---|--|--------|-----------------------------|
| Households by type                                    |  | Number | Tamworth Regional Council % |
| <b>a</b> Couples with children                        |  | 102    | 13.2                        |
| <b>a</b> Couples without children                     |  | 217    | 28.1                        |
| <b>a</b> Group household                              |  | 21     | 2.7                         |
| <b>a</b> Lone person                                  |  | 287    | 37.1                        |
| <b>a</b> One parent families                          |  | 65     | 8.4                         |
| Other families  |  | 6      | 0.8                         |
| Other not classifiable household                      |  | 61     | 7.9                         |
| Visitor only households                               |  | 14     | 1.8                         |
| Total households                                      |  | 773    | 100.0                       |

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2016 and 2021. Compiled and presented by .ic  
Please refer to specific data notes for more information

In Barraba - Rural North, 3.6% of the population earned an income of \$2,000 or more per week in 2021.

In Barraba - Rural North, 4.4% of households earned an income of \$3,000 or more per week in 2021.

The major differences between Barraba - Rural North's individual incomes and Tamworth Regional Council's individual incomes were:

- A *larger* percentage of persons who earned \$400 - \$499 (16.6% compared to 9.0%)
- A *larger* percentage of persons who earned \$300 - \$399 (15.0% compared to 8.7%)
- A *smaller* percentage of persons who earned \$1,000 - \$1,249 (4.9% compared to 10.8%)
- A *smaller* percentage of persons who earned \$2,000 - \$2,999 (2.1% compared to 5.4%)



## Golf Notes

Locally we played a Stableford event for a club trophy. The winner on a countback with 33 points was visitor Seb West. Runner up was

Shane Middlemiss 33 points with Campbell Tonkin on 29 points. One NTP to visitor Grace Boardman on the 3rd. Pleasing to say Grace sunk the birdie.

A good contingent of Barraba golfers played in the Manilla 4BBB Men's Open on Sunday with an excellent turnout of 70 players. The event was taken out by Manilla locals Matthew Martin and Dominic Price with an excellent 49 points. Runners up on 47 were Barraba's Ian Cabot and Neil Smith on 47. Other good Barraba scores were Dan Lott and Tom Mellor 44 points who picked up a 9 hole trophy.

Next Sunday 6th July is the Men's Foursomes Championships whilst the following Sunday 13th July is the Ladies Foursomes Championships whilst the men will play a stroke event for Kerrie Smith's trophy.

### RECENT ANNIVERSARIES

- Julia Gillard becoming Australia's 27th Prime Minister (2010)
- the longest match in tennis history, where American John Isner defeated France's Nicolas Mahut at Wimbledon after 11 hours, 5 minutes of play over 3 days (2010)
- women being allowed to drive for the first time in Saudi Arabia after the ban was lifted (2018)
- the invention of the toothbrush in China using boar bristles (1498)
- the publication of JK Rowling's Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone (1997)
- the publication of the first women's magazine, the Ladies' Mercury (1693)
- the world's first ATM installed in London (1967)
- the last stand of the Kelly Gang at Glenrowan (1880)
- the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, Archduke of Austria (1914)
- the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, ending WWI and establishing the League of Nations (1919)
- Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London burning down during a performance of Henry VIII (1613)
- the world's first emergency telephone number (999) being introduced in London (1937)
- the Hong Kong national security law coming into effect (2020)



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|--|---|--|



Your Shortcut to... **The social media ban for U16 year olds**

In less than 6 months, the Albanese Government's ban on social media for children under 16 year olds will come into effect. It's the first law of its kind to be passed in the world, but there are still a lot of questions over how exactly it'll work. So, in this Squiz Shortcut, we'll cover:

- what's in the legislation
- how it's meant to work
- and where the tech is up to

Last November, the federal government passed a law that will ban children under the age of 16yo from having accounts on social media platforms - ones like TikTok, Instagram, X, Snapchat and Facebook, plus a few others.

**Why is there a need for this?**

The main stated reason for introducing the new law is to protect children's mental health and wellbeing because of the potentially harmful content they're exposed to online.

**How will it work?**

Top line: you'll have to be 16 or older to use the apps we mentioned. It'll come into effect on 10 December, and it will be up to the companies running the platforms to take reasonable steps to prevent kids from having an account.

**So, to be clear - tech companies will bear the legal responsibility?**

Yep, and that's an important point to note - the onus will be on the companies that run the apps to block children. So parents and kids won't be fined for breaching the rules if they find ways to get around the law (and, let's face it, there aren't too many kids who won't try)... And the fines are pretty hefty.

**How much are we talking about?**

They're designed to make the tech giants take the law seriously, so companies could be fined up to \$49.5 million for breaches if they don't demonstrate that they've taken 'reasonable steps' to put in place systems to identify and block underage users.

**What are defined as 'reasonable steps'?**

It's a bit of a grey area - that's why there's going to be a 12-month grace period before penalties for non-compliance come in.

**How will the companies identify underage users?**

Well, there's going to have to be a way for the age of users to be verified by the tech platforms. The government's on a bit of a steep learning curve with this one - they've commissioned an independent software consultancy firm to carry out an Age Assurance Trial, and part of its remit is to test various types of age detection tech and work out how

best to identify the age of users without impinging on their privacy. And it's proving to be tricky...

**Why is that?**

In practice, it requires anyone who uses social media to prove that they're older than 16yo to log in. A preliminary report from the trial released last week said that age detection tech does work and that it can be integrated into existing platforms and can also "support the safety and rights of children online". But the report didn't include details of what tests were undertaken or any specific results.

**When will the full report be available?**

It's due to be handed to Communications Minister Anika Wells at the end of next month... In the meantime, there are some other tests of similar tech going on, which have found that face-scanning technology, which is one method being tested, varies in its accuracy.

**What were the results?**

A recent ABC report about the tech said children aged 15 were misidentified as being in their 20s and 30s, and that it could only guess the age of school students within an 18-month range in 85% of cases...

That's led to some experts raising concerns about whether the tech is up to the job. One of those is Lisa Given, a Professor of Information Sciences at RMIT, who told the ABC she doesn't think the social media ban is viable. She says that 85% accuracy is "quite low" and that "an 18-month range is significant when you're trying to identify a very particular age grouping".

**So, the ban could affect all people, not just young people?**

Yep, under the new law, the apps will likely also require adults to demonstrate their ages before they log in, which opens up a whole lot of questions and concerns over privacy. Concerns have been raised about how much personal information the tech platforms will collect, what's done with it, and how often people would be required to verify their ID... There are also questions around what happens if people's ages are mistaken and children are allowed to access social media, or conversely, if people older than 16yo are blocked.

**Has this law come out of the blue?**

It might seem that way to teenagers, but as a society, we've been building up to it for years. And to understand the huge push behind it, reports say you need only speak to parents... According to research, many parents say they've been caught in a bind of not wanting their kids to be socially excluded, but also worried about what they might be exposed to online through social media. Our eSafety Commissioner, Julie Inman Grant, says the darker aspects of the online world are coming at our kids whether they're prepared for them or not. And she says taking the decision

out of the hands of parents and making it law is a huge weight off their shoulders.

#### **What sort of content is she talking about?**

Inman Grant says there's currently next to no protections in place for kids accessing social media, and that 7 in 10 children have encountered content associated with harm, including online bullying, mis and disinformation, misogynistic content, hate speech, pornography and grooming behaviour from adults. And while the technologies to implement the ban may be having some teething problems, Inman Grant says the law is vital to shield kids from that content - and she's also called for YouTube to be included.

#### **Isn't YouTube for videos?**

That's what it says. YouTube says 84% of Aussie teachers use it on a monthly basis in class, and that including it in the ban would disadvantage students across the country. But the commissioner has pushed back on that - she says the ban wouldn't get in the way of teaching. And she named YouTube as the most popular and prevalent platform used by children, and "correspondingly, it's where they achieve the most amount of harm".

#### **What about the social aspect of social media for kids?**

One thing the government is keen for people to understand is that they 'get' that social media is, by its nature, social for kids and it's a big part of how they've grown up and where they connect with friends. In announcing the law last year, former Communications Minister Michelle Rowland said the government is trying to balance protecting kids while letting them enjoy the social side of being online, like gaming, messaging and building relationships. They've carved gaming and messaging apps out of the ban, so they'll still be accessible, but the social void the ban stands to create is a big concern raised by many youth advocates.

Groups like the Australian Youth Affairs Coalition argue that many young people find representation and community online that they aren't seeing in their local areas or in mainstream media, and just blanket-banning them from accessing it isn't the right way to go.

#### **So, how will a balance be achieved?**

Good question... How they'll address the social gap, and how they'll clear the tech hurdles they're facing before the law comes in, remains to be seen. One thing is for sure, though - a lot of eyes will be on us.

As we mentioned earlier, the legislation is a world-first, and a number of countries, including New Zealand, the UK, and Norway, are keen to follow suit - so they're watching to see how it goes...



### **Pat Penna's Ginger Nut Biscuits**

#### **Ingredients**

4 Tbs butter  
2 cups sugar  
2 eggs  
1 tsp Cream of Tartar  
2 tsp Carb Soda  
4 Tbs treacle  
2 dessertspoons ground ginger  
1 tsp lemon essence  
3 cups plain flour  
Can add 2 Tbs milk if needed

#### **Method**

Pat says "My measurements aren't exact and not always level."

Place 1 tsp size mixture on a tray lined with baking paper.

Cook in a moderate oven for 10-15 minutes and cool slightly before removing from the tray.

Makes about 80-100 biscuits

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**I'm only allowed one biscuit with  
a cup of tea on my diet.**

