



FREE LOCAL NEWSPAPER

BARRABA COMMUNITY NEWS

COMMUNITY OWNED AND EDITED

Wednesday 16th July 2025

Hello

Greetings from the Men's Shed, it is that time of the year again when we hold our AGM. If you are a member and would like to attend, we will be holding it on the 8th August, 2025 at 11am. If you are not a member and would like to be one, you can enroll at the shed on Mondays/Wednesdays and Fridays.

To contact the Men's Shed please call 0404 627 567. If you are unfamiliar with where the shed is, it is in Clifton Lane off Maude Street. Thank you for your time.



BARRABA RSL & RECREATIONAL CLUB LTD

Phone 67821379
For the information of
members and guests.

THIS WEEK

FRIDAY 18th July

MEAT RAFFLES

MEMBERSHIP DRAW \$1200

SATURDAY 19TH JULY

BINGO STARTS AT 12.30

SUNDAY 20th July

ANGLER CLUB RAFFLES

Raffles on sale from 12pm, drawn 1.30pm

MEMBERSHIP DRAW \$2000

BISTRO HOURS

Phone 0427330808

DINE IN OR TAKEAWAY

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

A chance to earn, learn and belong



Tamworth Regional Council have opened their annual apprenticeship and traineeship intake for 2025, creating an opportunity to kickstart a new career locally. The program provides a unique way for people to gain qualifications while earning a wage and receiving on-the-job training across a broad range of Council services and facilities.

Natasha Beer, Manager People & Culture Operations, said the program reflects Council's focus on fostering a supportive and inclusive workplace while growing local talent. "Our apprenticeships and traineeships are designed to provide genuine career pathways while also encouraging people to make a lasting impact on the community they live in", said Ms Beer. "It's worth working at Council for many reasons, including our offering of work-life balance, our focus on employee wellbeing and belonging, and our commitment to ensure our team feel supported both professionally and personally".

This year's intake features a diverse selection of roles designed to match a variety of interests and career goals. Available traineeships include positions in gallery and museums, visitor experience, sports and recreation, waste operations, survey and design, water and at Council's AELEC facility. Apprenticeship opportunities include roles in Council's fitter machinist and mechanics workshops and in transport operations.

Applications are open now and close in August 2025, with closure dates varying between roles. Applicants can apply and find out more at www.tamworth.nsw.gov.au/applynow.



Barraba Rugby Union Football Club

60th Anniversary

26th July 2025 – Barraba vs Quirindi

The Barraba Rugby Club would like to invite all past players and supporters to our 60th 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



BARRABA COMMUNITY NEWS

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area.**

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History Notes

This week has seen the arrival of the June, 2025, History Magazine. Lots of people cast these volumes aside but I mostly flick through them with the hope of finding something relevant to our area. This month I found a reference to George Wood concerning a sum of money to Thomas Cross's two daughters in 1845.

Perhaps I should add a bit of information about Thomas Cross. He was born in Hertfordshire, England. His death sentence for stealing sheep was commuted to transportation for life. He arrived in Australia in 1811. Three years later he married Martha Bryant – he was 37 and she was almost 16 years old. They had eleven children.

Sadly, Martha died in August 1839, aged 41 years leaving a large family aged from 25 years down to 2 years. The older girls cared for the younger children until sadly they were orphaned when Thomas Cross died in March 1843. It is very likely that Martha's stepparents stepped in to care for the younger children – thus the donation to Thomas Cross's two daughters in 1845 – 10 pounds 11 shillings would have been quite a donation in those days. The receipt was signed by Daniel Eaton (Martha's stepfather).

The Cross family are spread across this area, especially Walcha and of course the numerous Crowley descendants are related through Martha's sister who was Mrs John Crowley, mother of William of Cobbadah Station.

To change the subject – we paused the markets through winter and with this cold, windy weather and the improvements to the paths between the buildings, it was a good decision. Hopefully when spring has sprung, we will start the markets again.

Message from the Editor

At *Barraba Community News* we welcome local news and stories from our community members about activities, events and news of interest to the Barraba community.

Share your news, views and what you or your local organisation is doing.

Advertise in *News* at a competitive cost and reach 750 households in our area who receive a free copy each week.

Contact news@barrabacommunitynews.org.au or drop into the Community College on the corner of Alice and Fitzroy Sts.

Extreme weather losses in 2025 exceed \$1.8 billion

The total insured cost of extreme weather events that impacted Australia in the first half of 2025 has now exceeded \$1.8 billion, according to new data released by the Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) today.

Incurred claims from the most recent event, the Mid-North Coast and Hunter Floods, have reached almost \$200 million across 11,500 claims. Incurred claims from the most costly and widespread event this year, Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred, have now exceeded 125,000 claims totalling \$1.36 billion. Incurred claims from the North Queensland floods in February have reached \$274 million across more than 11,000 claims.

Event	Claim count	Sum of Incurred
Nth Qld Floods	11,234	\$274 million
Tropical Cyclone Alfred	125,656	\$1.36 billion
Mid Nth Cst/Hunter Floods	11,547	\$194 million
Total	148,437	\$1.833 billion

Following these events, the ICA and insurers held customer engagement events in Cardwell, Ingham and Hervey Bay as well as establishing Insurance Hubs in Townsville, Taree, and Port Macquarie. Additionally, insurers maintained an extended presence at many Queensland and New South Wales recovery centres and hubs during the recovery phases of the events.

Plans for future insurer visits and consultations in these affected regions and surrounding communities are underway.

ICA Director of Mitigation and Extreme Weather Response Liam Walter. "We've had a busy start to 2025 with three declared events totalling more than \$1.8 billion in claims incurred to date. While this damage bill isn't as severe as first expected, we acknowledge that for many communities, recovery is still very much ongoing and there is still a long road ahead. The ICA is also closely monitoring the weather event that's unfolding in New South Wales and urges residents right along the coast to follow the advice of emergency services. Insurers are leaning forward and ready to support communities should they be impacted."



**Council Meeting
Update – 8 July,
2025**

Here is an overview of outcomes from the Ordinary Meeting of Tamworth Regional Council:

- In a move to accommodate population growth, facilitate infrastructure delivery, and enhance liveability in the Tamworth Region, Councillors have tonight approved the public exhibition of the Draft Tamworth Regional Structure Plans. The draft structure plans have been prepared by an external urban design consultant and provide a high-level framework for development, housing, transport, open space, and land use in three key precincts; Precinct 1: Southern Gateway Activation Precinct; Precinct 2: Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct; and Precinct 3: Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct. The draft plans will go on public exhibition later this month for 42 days.
- Councillors will consider a range of issues to put as motions to the Local Government NSW 2025 Annual Conference later this year. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors Marc Sutherland and Matt Sharpham will attend the conference in Penrith at the end of November as voting delegates. Councillor Ryan Brooke will also attend as an observer. Councillors are allocated \$2,000 annually to attend the conference.
- Councillors approved \$5170 from the 2024-2025 Annual Donations Program, to assist with costs for the construction of a mobile bird aviary designed to support a program of control, for the introduced pest bird species commonly known as the Indian Myna. The Indian Myna Pest Bird Control Program, initiated within the community, will be supported by Tamworth Birdwatchers and Tamworth's Community Men's Shed, with members providing voluntary, skilled labour for construction of the aviary, information signage to better inform residents of the full extent of the bird problem, and pest-bird capture.

For more information, see the full reports at www.tamworth.nsw.gov.au/business-papers



Bingara RSL Sub-Branch Military Ball

FEATURING LIVE ENTERTAINMENT BY
The Australian Army Band ~ Newcastle Ensemble

Saturday 2nd August 2025 ~ 6 pm 'til late
BINGARA RETURNED SERVICES CLUB

Tickets \$70 p/p

Available at Bingara Visitor Information Centre or trybooking.com
Three course meal ~ lucky door prizes ~ raffles

BARRABA'S GRACE CROWLEY – AN EXHIBITION **AT THE TAMWORTH ART GALLERY**

Three exhibitions and an outdoor art projection

Three new art exhibitions will officially launch this Friday 4 July at the Tamworth Regional Gallery.

An official launch event is being held to showcase the; Present/Place exhibition by artists Armando Chant, Sadhbha Cockburn, Justine Roche, and Belinda Yee; Dhurranmay-Gal Dhirrabuu: (Outstanding Leaders) by the Tamworth NAIDOC Committee and Grace and Grace works on loan from the National Gallery of Australia and by artists Grace Crowley (of Barraba) and Grace Cossington Smith.

Director of Tamworth Regional Gallery and Museums, Bridget Guthrie says it is a diverse showcasing of art.

“These exhibitions each have their own representations, while highlighting the talented work of artists in varying forms. We’ve got photography in the Outstanding Leaders exhibition, digitally altered photographs and 3D works in Present/Place and paintings in the Grace and Grace works”.

Of particular significance to the region is the Grace and Grace exhibition. These works of art are on loan from the National Gallery of Australia with support from the Australian Government as part of the Sharing the National Collection. “We are simply thrilled to have four beautiful artworks on display from Grace Crowley and Grace Cossington Smith. Grace Crowley was from Barraba so her works showing the beautiful landscapes of rural Australia is something that our community can really resonate with”.

Adding to the atmosphere of the opening event of these works will be the official launch of Tamworth’s newest public art space. The Outdoor Gallery is a digital projection space located in Fitzroy Street plaza and will showcase a rotating line up of animated artworks by regional artists, lighting up the CBD each month. This public art initiative builds on Tamworth’s proud reputation as the ‘City of Light’, transforming the side of the building at 1 Fitzroy Street into a canvas for artistic video projections. After being trialled at a number of events throughout 2023 and 2024, permanent projection equipment was able to be installed. The first projection of the 2025 program launched last week with an artwork designed by Gomeroi artist Tess Reading. The projections will now continue during NAIDOC Week, projected from Friday 4 July – Sunday 10 July from 7pm–10pm each night.

“Being able to showcase art in a diverse way is something that not only helps to grow the profile of regional artists and the creative industry, but it helps us to build cultural diversity in our region.”

Each month over the next 18 months, a new artist and animated artwork will be featured, offering something fresh and exciting for returning visitors.

Grace Adela Williams Crowley (1890–1979) **by Daniel Thomas**



Portrait of Grace Crowley in Paris, c1928, by unknown photographer. Source: Art Gallery of New South Wales Archive

Grace Adela Williams Crowley (1890-1979), painter, was born on 28 May 1890 at Forrest Lodge, Cobbadah, New South Wales, elder daughter and fourth child of native-born parents Henry Crowley, grazier, and his wife Elizabeth, née Bridger. By 1900 the family had moved to nearby Glen Riddle, Barraba. When Grace was about 13 her parents sent one of her pen-and-ink drawings to the magazine, *New Idea*, which awarded her a prize. Taught by governesses at the homestead, in 1907 she had a year at boarding-school in Sydney and attended Julian Ashton's Sydney Art School one day a week.

Back in the bush, she 'did no more drawing' once her mother sacked the maid and introduced Grace to 'household duties'. Her interest revived following Ashton's painting trip to Glen Riddle about 1910. She studied full time at the Sydney Art School from 1915 and in 1918 became an assistant-teacher there. Grace shared a flat and later a cottage at Vaucluse with her best friend Anne Dangar. Having exhibited (from 1916) with the Society of Artists, Crowley resigned her teaching position in 1923 and prepared for the society's travelling scholarship. She went to Glen Riddle on holidays, completed several rural subjects and 'longed to "do a thing"

of men shearing, but my father vetoed that'. Her parents grudgingly gave her the fare to Europe, and her brother Wilfred sent her an annual stipend. In February 1926 she left with Dangar for France, intending to study at the Slade school in London.

Crowley's four years in Paris were the most enjoyable of her life. Grace and Anne worked at Colarossi's without a teacher, acquired their own studio-home at Montrouge in October and from early 1927 were enrolled at André Lhote's academy at Montparnasse (where Crowley spent three years). Lhote's academic cubism was a revelation, as were geometric systems like Dynamic Symmetry and the Golden Section. An occasional writer, Crowley had contributed a chapter to *The Julian Ashton Book* (Sydney, 1920) and was to send letters from France and lectures on cubism for publication in the Sydney Art School's journal, *Undergrowth*.

Learning of her mother's illness, Grace returned to Glen Riddle in February 1930 to find her easel thrown upon a rubbish tip and Anne about to settle in France. By then Crowley was probably the most experienced modernist painter in Australia.

In March 1930 her French work was seen in the Group of Seven exhibition at the Macquarie Galleries, Sydney; a modernist portrait of her cousin Gwen Ridley was a startling sight in the 1930 Archibald prize competition. Crowley came to Sydney in 1932 to help Dorrit Black with exhibitions, art classes and a sketch club at her short-lived Modern Art Centre where Crowley held her first solo exhibition, chiefly showing work from France. Obtaining a studio at 215a George Street, she and 'Rah' Fizelle established the Crowley-Fizelle school, the principal centre for modernist painting. When it closed in 1937 she impulsively invited Ralph Balson to continue his weekend painting in her studio-flat at 227 George Street, a pleasant, rooftop terrace, shaded with a grapevine.

In 1949 Crowley taught abstract painting at East Sydney Technical College before handing over to Balson. In 1954 Crowley bought High Hill, a house at Mittagong. Balson painted there at weekends and decorated the ceiling of the living-room with a large, constructivist design; he later lived in the garden-studio.

Her own painting virtually ceased as she watched over him. She only half-heartedly followed Balson's new, loose direction in several isolated paintings to which she turned her hand in England and France in 1960-61 while travelling with him. Grace was content to be at High Hill: the 'garden and the house and their care seemed to take up my time'.

After Balson died in August 1964, Crowley gave her energy to ensuring his place in art history. Her own work was

reassessed and her paintings were suddenly acquired for art museum collections. A major exhibition, Balson, Crowley, Fizelle, Hinder (1966), and a retrospective exhibition of her work (1975) were mounted by the Art Gallery of New South Wales. The feminist movement, as well as the growth of Australian art history, brought admirers in Crowley's late years.

Small and very slight of build, Grace was somewhat vague in manner and self-effacing in promoting Balson's work. Yet she was strong-willed in her own self-liberation from housework in the bush to painting in Sydney and Paris (and in her insistence on the pronunciation of the name Crowley, to rhyme with 'slowly'). She dressed with chic, favouring the simplest, cream, linen dresses and silk scarves. She lived in immaculate, sparsely decorated, light-filled spaces, with pots by Dangar and paintings by Balson.



Portrait of Grace Crowley, 1970 by Robert Walker © Estate of Robert Walker. Source: Art Gallery of New South Wales Archive

High Hill was sold in 1966. Next year Grace bought a modern flat at Manly (she kept her George Street studio until 1971). Fizelle's widow also moved to a flat on a different floor of the same building. They both received research students and museum curators, planned the disposition of the works still in their care, and complained about each other. Crowley died at her home on 21 April 1979 and was cremated. Her estate was sworn for probate at \$318,441; she bequeathed her remaining paintings to Australian art museums and her papers to the Mitchell Library, Sydney. Balson's portrait (1939) of Crowley is in the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

Her teaching and single-minded nurturing of Balson's reputation might seem as important as her own rather small body of work. However, her painting, like her dress and living spaces, was consciously pared down. Crowley knew that the twenty-five paintings and twelve drawings gathered together in 1975 were enough. Seeing her life's work summed up, she was 'Appalled, and thrilled'.

BARRABA UNITING CHURCH NOTICES

Sun 20th July Service at Barraba at 10.45am.

All Welcome

ANGLICAN CHURCH TIMES

St Laurence's Barraba

Sunday service at 10.00am

No Woodsreef service in July.

CATHOLIC CHURCH TIMES

Barraba 1st Sunday of the month, Saturday evening

Mass 5pm

All other Sundays 9am

Have you met a Samaritan lately?

Greetings to all readers...

The wonderful discovery of the young German backpacker in WA by a real "salt of the earth" farming lady made the word "angel" come to her; many times, when some stranger comes to help us we see them as some kind of angel; a description of those moments when we meet someone totally strange who goes out of their way to help or rescue us.

The other word we often hear is "Samaritan" and it's usually accompanied by the word "good". This Sunday in many churches we had the gospel of the Good Samaritan which is only found in Saint Luke's gospel and it is a wonderful challenge to all people to see that their neighbour is not just the people who live near them or who look like us or who think like us but maybe people very different to us and maybe don't even like us.

Sometimes people poke a bit of fun at us priests where it says in the parable that the priest saw the man bleeding and lying by the road and walked by on the other side of the road. I remember when teaching some rather lively young people and asked them "why did the priest walk by?" and did not come to the help of the man who was robbed, one boy answered "probably because he realised he had already been robbed" not quite the answer I was expecting.

The Jewish people, of which Jesus was one, had very strict rules in ancient times about going near dead bodies or people who are bleeding. If the priest, coming back from Jerusalem and heading down to Jericho, came in contact with this man, he would most probably have to go back and be ritually cleansed for a period of two weeks and offer a sacrifice which would be expensive, and then go home to an absolutely irate wife.

So, I guess he thought it might be better if someone else helped the man if he is still alive. But he did not help the man in Jesus parable so he was not really a neighbour. The Samaritan man however who were a bit like Palestinians who often had tensions and even conflict with their Jewish brothers (even back then) was a neighbour to the poor man at the side of the road; dragging him to an inn, paying for the cost of his staying there, and even pouring oil and wine on his wounds.

It's a challenge to all of us to not simply think "someone else will do it when we are at hand" because if we think that way, the person will not get helped at all. It is a phenomenon often seen in cities where a man or even a child will be lying in the street or in a laneway and many, many people just walk past without coming to help or at least ringing 000.

On a spiritual level don't forget that we, through sin are wounded as well, and it is Jesus himself who, like the Samaritan, tends to our own wounds by the love he showed for us on the cross and proven to be valid by his resurrection from the dead. We are only individual people among billions in the world today and yet God has time for each one of us and we are all important. That's an impossible task for again being to care for everybody; God can do that but we can't. What we can do is come to the help of people as the need arises and not leave it to someone else.

From Fr John Curran, Manilla/Barraba

From Aileen MacDonald MLC

Minns Labor Government shuts down lifeline for small business owners.

The Minns Labor Government has delivered a blow to small businesses in Country North in its recent Budget by axing funding for the highly successful Business Connect program.

Country North MLC, Mrs MacDonald said, "Small businesses are the backbone of our local community. They're run by mums and dads, family operators, and young entrepreneurs giving it a go. Cutting support like Business Connect doesn't just hurt balance sheets, it hurts local jobs, confidence, and the next generation of business owners. Government should be making it easier to succeed, not harder."

Business Connect has supported thousands of small businesses across NSW by providing up to 8 hours of free, one-on-one tailored advice in areas such as strategic guidance, digital marketing, financial planning and business resilience.

Business Connect is scheduled to end on 30 September 2025. The Liberal and National Coalition is calling on the Minns Labor Government to urgently reverse this decision and commit to continuing funding Business Connect services.

TAMWORTH BIRDWATCHERS INC.

PROBLEM BIRDS IN THE TAMWORTH CBD

A SNAPSHOT SURVEY - JUNE 2025

Tamworth Birdwatchers Inc wish to collaborate with Tamworth Regional Council on a program to address the growing problem of the Common "Indian" Myna (and other pest birds). We have developed a viable solution*, based on a successful lure and trap aviary in Dubbo. Our survey results support action.



Indian Myna, alfresco cafe in Peel St, 16/6/25

KEY SURVEY RESULTS

- The **most common birds in the CBD were pests**: the Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon) was the most common, followed by the Common 'Indian' Myna and then the House Sparrow.
- **Native birds were seen in very small numbers** i.e., Galah, Nosy Miner, Magpie-lark and Noisy Friarbird.
- **Pest birds outnumbered native birds** by a ratio of approx. 8:1
- On average, seated observers counted **21 Indian Myna over 1 hour**.
- The Indian Myna was observed in **close proximity to humans**; on street seating and tables at outdoor cafes.

Facts about the Indian Myna

- Prolific breeding rate; 10 young / year / breeding pair
- Carriers of bird mites and salmonella
- Highly aggressive - can prevent successful breeding of native species (invading hollows, killing chicks etc)

FERAL BIRDS CAN:

- Diminish public amenity;
- Curb future regional prosperity e.g. bird tourism;
- Risk environmental and public health;
- Impede agricultural production; and
- Fuel biodiversity loss

SURVEY METHOD:

Experienced bird watchers identified, counted and recorded all species of birds in the Tamworth CBD on two occasions:

- Friday 20 June 2025, 10am - 11am, Inland Cafe; (2 observers) and
- Monday 23 June 2025, 2pm - 3pm, CH on Peel (3 observers)



Observing, Recording and
Conserving Birds in the Tamworth
Region of NSW since 1986

*for Common "Indian" Myna and Starlings only

www.tamworthbirdwatchers.com

Rural Aid's 'Spirit of the Bush' Photo Competition Returns to Celebrate Life on the Land

Rural Aid is proud to launch the 6th annual Spirit of the Bush Photo Competition, inviting Australians to share striking images that capture the strength, resilience, and beauty of life on the land.

Running from 14 July to 31 August 2025, the much-loved competition provides a powerful platform for rural and regional Australians to tell their stories through the lens, stories of rugged beauty, resilience and community spirit in the face of hardship.

This year's competition comes after another challenging season of natural disasters, with floods, fires, and droughts once again testing the resolve of the nation's rural heartland.

"Every year, we are humbled by the entries we receive, each photo is a tribute to the unwavering spirit of our farming families and communities," said Rural Aid CEO, John Warlters.

"The Spirit of the Bush competition is more than a showcase of talent. It's a reminder of the grit and determination that keeps rural Australia going, even through the toughest of times."

Entrants are invited to submit a high-resolution, landscape photograph that represents the true Spirit of the Bush. Photos can be submitted via Instagram or Facebook by tagging @ruralaid in the image and using the hashtag #SOTB2025. Entries can also be submitted, and the competition terms and conditions can be reviewed via our website at <https://www.ruralaid.org.au/spirit-of-the-bush/>.

A panel of judges will select ten winning images, each of which will receive a \$250 prepaid Visa card. Winners will be announced on 15 September 2025.

"This is a celebration of the people and places that make our regions special," Mr Warlters said. "Whether it's a hardworking farmer, a storm rolling across a paddock, or a quiet moment at sunset, every image has the power to connect Australians with the bush."

Golf Notes



A small field turned out in glorious conditions to play an individual stroke for Kerry Smith's trophy. Winner of the day with 70 Nett score was Chris Sweeny who is playing some very impressive golf at the moment. Runner up was Bill Simpson with a 72 nett and in 3rd was Neil Smith with 74.

In match play Neil Smith defeated Stacey Sedgwick 2up.

Next week is the 3rd round of our Club Championships playing for Sam Faint's trophy.

PLANTS FOR PURPOSE

A workshop with **Dave Carr** from Stringybark Ecological



WHEN: THURSDAY 17TH JULY
TIME: 10AM-3PM
WHERE: THE LIVING CLASSROOM BINGARA
COST: \$10 FOR NSLA MEMBERS \$20 NON-MEMBERS

Morning tea and lunch provided

Attendees choose a **FREE** plant with more available for sale

Learn how to select the best local species for your purpose (e.g. erosion control, shelter belt....) - and what the main identifying features are that help you make that decision.

REGISTER HERE  or go to <https://www.sticktickets.com.au/7DTQK>
 RSVP by 14/07 for catering purposes

☎ 0438 353 682 ✉ coordinator@nsla.net.au

This project is supported by the NSW Government through the Sustainable Communities Fund



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Barraba Rams dominate Gunnedah at home

It was another great weekend of rugby in Barraba as the Rams hosted Gunnedah on home turf. With the men looking to carry on their winning momentum and the women eager to bounce back from last week's loss, both teams stepped up with grit, determination and a strong showing for the home crowd.

The Women's side were first to take the field and delivered an exceptional performance. Determined to respond to last week's result, the girls came out strong, controlling early possession and turning it into the opening try of the match. Gunnedah were quick to respond after the reset, but Barraba stayed composed and answered with a second try to reclaim the lead keeping the lead for the rest of the game. Defensive efforts were led by the front row, with Brianna Middlemiss and Leilani Tevaga putting in big tackles throughout the game. Lily Walker proved hard to stop with several excellent runs, finishing one with a well-deserved try. Jess Kelso and Leilani Tevaga also crossed the line, and Brooke McKinnon added to the tally with two well-placed conversions. The Rams' strong passing game and smart substitutions kept their momentum going, with fresh legs off the bench helping to close out a hard-fought match. The girls showed excellent teamwork and resilience, finishing the game with a well-earned 24–19 victory.

Women's Points:

3 – Leilani Tevaga

2 – Jemma Johnson & Brooke McKinnon

1 – Brianna Mack

Players Player – Jemma Johnson & Leilani Tevaga

The Men carried their winning form into this week's clash with Gunnedah, determined to defend the Kookaburra Cup. Right from the kick-off, the boys set the tone with high intensity, scoring the opening try in quick fashion. Although Gunnedah responded with a converted try in the third minute, Barraba didn't let up. They hit back immediately, regaining the lead and keeping the pressure on throughout the match. Tries came from across the park, including efforts from Cooper Chapman, Dylan Walker, Nicholas Sweeney, Cody Townsend, and Liam Mack—each showing sharp awareness, quick footwork, and solid execution. Windy conditions made conversions tricky, with three of the six tries successfully converted by Oisin McKenna. Gunnedah had the edge in scrum weight, but the Rams held strong, with outstanding defensive efforts from Soren Stobbart and Nick Sweeney. Kane and Jack Ward provided consistent support across the field, contributing to a complete team performance. Barraba's physicality, structure, and

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BARRABA BASED AND WILL TRAVEL TO SURROUNDING AREAS

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ONE TRADESMAN WITH BOTH ELECTRICAL & REFRIGERATION LICENSES

2.5kw Mitsubishi Heavy Industries A/C <small>Fully Installed - Back to Back</small> \$2270	5 kw Mitsubishi Heavy Industries A/C <small>Fully Installed - Back to Back</small> \$2870	7.1kw Mitsubishi Heavy Industries A/C <small>Fully Installed - Back to Back</small> \$3350
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commitment paid off, with the team successfully retaining the Kookaburra Cup in a strong 36–21 victory.

Men's Points:

3 – Soren Stobbart

2 – Liam Mack

1 – Alex Abra & Nick Sweeney

Players Player – Dylan Walker

The Barraba Rams head to Narrabri this weekend and encourage all supporters to travel with the teams and cheer them on.

We'd like to thank our loyal supporters for continuing to back our teams and our clubhouse. However, we also remind everyone that aggressive, abusive, or antisocial behaviour towards staff, committee members, players, or fellow spectators will not be tolerated. Any such behaviour will result in removal from the venue. Our club is a family-friendly environment, and we are committed to keeping it that way. Security will be present at all remaining home games to help ensure a safe and enjoyable atmosphere for everyone.

From The Conversation

Can cats drink milk? Despite the stereotypes, it's actually a bad idea.

Julia Henning, PhD Candidate in Feline Behaviour, School of Animal and Veterinary Science, University of Adelaide

Cats have a long history with humans, going back more than 9,000 years. Attracted to human settlements by the rodents that plagued (sometimes literally) our ancestors, cats ingratiated themselves as useful mousers and slowly domesticated themselves. Farmers began to employ them as pest controllers. It was through this arrangement that cats and milk first became acquainted.

Before the commercialisation of pet food, cats were mostly fed scraps from the family table. Not much was known about their nutritional needs. In his 1877 book on cats, Scottish doctor Gordon Stables insisted cats need two bowls – “one for water and the other for milk” – and suggested porridge and milk as an excellent feline breakfast.

From these origins, cats and milk became further embedded in the collective zeitgeist through depictions of milk-loving cats in art, books, movies and cartoons. There's even the classic trope of the scruffy street cat being rescued from the rain to enjoy a saucer of milk from a kindly stranger. While it's not surprising that cats and milk have persisted as an unquestioned combination, research now tells us cats shouldn't be drinking milk at all.



The cultural connection between cats and milk goes far back in history, as shown in this 1921 photo. University Historic Photograph Collection, Archives & Special Collections, Colorado State University.

The vast majority of cats are lactose intolerant

Like all mammals, cats begin life drinking milk from their mother. But past kittenhood, milk is a completely unnecessary part of a cat's diet. After weaning (around 6–12 weeks of age), kittens stop producing the enzyme lactase, required to digest lactose in milk. For the vast majority of cats, this means they are lactose intolerant.

However, just like in humans, the level of intolerance varies for each individual based on how much of the enzyme their body naturally produces. Don't rush to give your kitten milk, though. Just because kittens can digest lactose doesn't mean they should be drinking cow's milk. Cats are much smaller animals than cows and, fittingly, the amount of lactose in the milk of mother cats is much lower than in cow's milk. It's best to let them drink from their mother or to get them a kitten-appropriate cat formula.

Lactose intolerance isn't the only reason not to give your cats milk. Though rare, cats can also develop an allergy to milk or dairy.



Milk from mother cats is different to cow's milk, which is not appropriate for kittens to drink. Hadifa Art/Shutterstock

What happens to cats who drink milk?

Lactose is a type of sugar. When it can't be broken down to be absorbed into the bloodstream, lactose travels through the intestines to the colon where the bacteria inside the body ferment it. This fermentation breaks lactose down into acids and gases which cause unpleasant symptoms, including the passing of excessive gas, bloating, constipation, abdominal pain and occasionally nausea and vomiting. In cats, the most common symptom observed is diarrhoea.

Chronic or persistent diarrhoea can cause further complications such as dehydration, electrolyte imbalance and malnutrition. In some cases, it can even be life threatening. Cats who consume milk or dairy regularly as part of their diet are at increased risk of these health complications.



When farm mousers are 'paid' in milk, their lactose intolerance can cause diarrhoea and even serious health complications. Aleksandr Lupin/Shutterstock

If milk is so bad for cats, why do they love it?

We often like things that are bad for us. But to answer this question, we first have to remember cow's milk is intended for feeding and growing a baby cow. To achieve this feat, it contains an assortment of proteins and fats that are highly palatable, especially to cats. Cats need high levels of protein and fat for optimal health and daily functioning.



If you want to treat your cat, give them species appropriate foods, not cow's milk or food meant for humans. Hamza Yaich/Pexels

Cow's milk, in particular, is also high in casein, a protein that is broken down by the body into alpha-caseozepine. In some studies, it's been associated with a calming effect in cats. While this wouldn't initially make a cat want to drink milk, it may create a comforting association with milk over time.

Can I give milk sometimes as a treat? What about milk alternatives?

The short answer is: no.

Dairy is not a natural part of cats' diet. While they may like the taste, milk is likely to cause your furry friend discomfort and health issues, so it's best to avoid entirely.

And if you're thinking your cat is one of the lucky few that isn't lactose intolerant, think again. Cats are very good at hiding discomfort because, in the wild, showing weakness would make them a target for predators.

If you absolutely must, opt for lactose-free milk or milk formulated specifically for cats, and keep it as a very occasional treat. While it won't upset their stomachs in the same way as regular cow's milk, it still won't offer your cat any nutritional benefit. As for milk alternatives like oat, soy or almond milk? Any unusual additions to your cat's diet are likely to cause digestive upset, so it's best to avoid these as well.

The bottom line? Don't give your cat milk. They don't need it, they probably can't digest it and it's likely to cause more pain than it's worth.

From The Conversation

I have a stuffy nose, how can I tell if it's hay fever, COVID or something else?

Deryn Thompson, Eczema and Allergy Nurse; Lecturer, University of South Australia

Hay fever (also called allergic rhinitis) affects 24% of Australians. Symptoms include sneezing, a runny nose (which may feel blocked or stuffy) and itchy eyes. People can also experience an itchy nose, throat or ears.

But COVID is still spreading, and other viruses can cause cold-like symptoms. So how do you know which one you've got?

Remind me, how does hay fever cause symptoms?

Hay fever happens when a person has become "sensitised" to an allergen trigger. This means a person's body is always primed to react to this trigger. Triggers can include allergens in the air (such as pollen from trees, grasses and flowers), mould spores, animals or house dust mites which mostly live in people's mattresses and bedding, and feed on shed skin. When the body is exposed to the trigger, it produces IgE (immunoglobulin E) antibodies. These cause the release of

many of the body’s own chemicals, including histamine, which result in hay fever symptoms.

People who have asthma may find their asthma symptoms (cough, wheeze, tight chest or trouble breathing) worsen when exposed to airborne allergens. Spring and sometimes into summer can be the worst time for people with grass, tree or flower allergies.

However, animal and house dust mite symptoms usually happen year-round.



Ryegrass pollen is a common culprit. bangku ceria/Shutterstock

What else might be causing my symptoms?

Hay fever does not cause a fever, sore throat, muscle aches and pains, weakness, loss of taste or smell, nor does it cause you to cough up mucus.

These symptoms are likely to be caused by a virus, such as COVID, influenza, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) or a “cold” (often caused by rhinoviruses). These conditions can occur all year round, with some overlap of symptoms:

How do common respiratory illnesses compare?

	Test	Duration	Season	Age	Symptoms
Rhinovirus	✗	7-10 days	All year	All	Runny nose, sore throat
RSV	✓	7-14 days	All year	Babies, older people & those with high-risk medical conditions	Wheezing, difficulty breathing in infants
Influenza	✓	3-7 days	Autumn & winter	All ages & those with high-risk medical conditions	Very high fevers, chills, muscle aches, headaches
Covid-19	✓	14-28 days	All year, with surges	Older people & those with high-risk medical conditions	Multi-organ involvement; sometimes loss of taste/smell

COVID still surrounds us. RSV and influenza rates appear higher than before the COVID pandemic, but it may be due to more testing. So, if you have a fever, sore throat, muscle aches/pains, weakness, fatigue, or are coughing up mucus, stay home and avoid mixing with others to limit transmission.

People with COVID symptoms can take a rapid antigen test (RAT), ideally when symptoms start, then isolate until symptoms disappear. One negative RAT alone can’t rule out COVID if symptoms are still present, so test again 24–48 hours after your initial test if symptoms persist. You can now test yourself for COVID, RSV and influenza in a combined RAT. But again, a negative test doesn’t rule out the virus. If your symptoms continue, test again 24–48 hours after the previous test.

If it’s hay fever, how do I treat it?

Treatment involves blocking the body’s histamine release, by taking antihistamine medication which helps reduce the symptoms. Doctors, nurse practitioners and pharmacists can develop a hay fever care plan. This may include using a nasal spray containing a topical corticosteroid to help reduce the swelling inside the nose, which causes stuffiness or blockage.

Nasal sprays need to be delivered using correct technique and used over several weeks to work properly. Often these sprays can also help lessen the itchy eyes of hay fever.

Drying bed linen and pyjamas inside during spring can lessen symptoms, as can putting a smear of Vaseline in the nostrils when going outside. Pollen sticks to the Vaseline, and gently blowing your nose later removes it.

People with asthma should also have an asthma plan, created by their doctor or nurse practitioner, explaining how to adjust their asthma reliever and preventer medications in hay fever seasons or on allergen exposure. People with asthma also need to be alert for thunderstorms, where pollens can burst into tinier particles, be inhaled deeper in the lungs and cause a severe asthma attack, and even death.

What if it’s COVID, RSV or the flu?

Australians aged 70 and over and others with underlying health conditions who test positive for COVID are eligible for antivirals to reduce their chance of severe illness. Most other people with COVID, RSV and influenza will recover at home with rest, fluids and paracetamol to relieve symptoms. However, some groups are at greater risk of serious illness and may require additional treatment or hospitalisation.

For RSV, this includes premature infants, babies 12 months and younger, children under two who have other medical conditions, adults over 75, people with heart and lung conditions, or health conditions that lessens the immune system response.

For influenza, people at higher risk of severe illness are pregnant women, Aboriginal people, people under five or over 65 years, or people with long-term medical conditions, such as kidney, heart, lung or liver disease, diabetes and decreased immunity.

If you're concerned about severe symptoms of COVID, RSV or influenza, consult your doctor or call 000 in an emergency. If your symptoms are mild but persist, and you're not sure

what's causing them, book an appointment with your doctor or nurse practitioner. Although hay fever season is here, we need to avoid spreading other serious infectious.

For more information, you can call the healthdirect helpline on 1800 022 222 (known as NURSE-ON-CALL in Victoria); use the online Symptom Checker; or visit healthdirect.gov.au or the Australian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy.

The late **Bill Bright** playing his almost complete harpsicord for the camera outside his workshop at his "Nuthouse". Rupert Richardson painted the illustration inside the soundboard. (Thanks to Brian Coote for the photo)



RECENT ANNIVERSARIES

- Pokémon Go (2016)
- the release of the Spice Girls' debut single Wannabe (1996)
- the first Wimbledon tennis championship (1877)
- Lady Godiva riding naked on horseback through Coventry to force her husband, the Earl of Mercia, to lower taxes. According to the legend, anyway... (1040)
- the beginning of the Battle of Britain during WWII (1940)
- German automaker Volkswagen ending production of the Beetle, the first model of which had been introduced in 1938 (2019)
- Britain's King Charles II ratifying the Habeas Corpus Act giving those under arrest the right to be brought before a judge or into court (1679)

- the death of US Founding Father Alexander Hamilton (1804)
- legislation being passed that gives women 21yo and older the right to vote in Aussie federal elections (1902)
- the Live Aid charity concert, which raised money for African famine relief (1985)
- Kylie Minogue releasing her debut single Locomotion (1987)
- the founding of #BlackLivesMatter in response to the acquittal of George Zimmerman on trial for the murder of Trayvon Martin (2013)
- the election of former British PM Theresa May (2016)
- an assassination attempt being carried out on former President Donald Trump at a rally in Pennsylvania