



FREE LOCAL NEWSPAPER

# BARRABA COMMUNITY NEWS

COMMUNITY OWNED AND EDITED

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2025



**PUBLIC NOTICE:** Back to the Bush Auto Festival organisers wish to advise the residents of Barraba NSW that as part of Back to the Bush Auto Festival 2025 there will be a fireworks display conducted at approx. 9.30pm on Saturday October 18th 2025. The event is only a few days away so we are making the announcement for the benefit of pet/stock owners who may be concerned for the welfare of their animals so they can ensure that all measures have been taken to protect them.

You can find some extremely helpful information from the RSPCA on the link below.

<https://www.rspca.org.au/latest-news/blog/caring-your-pets-during-fireworks-displays/>

## Correction to Pool Opening Hours

The season for the Barraba Pool and Heated Pool (previously known as the Hydrotherapy Pool) to open on Tuesday 14 October, 2025 and will finish Thursday 2 April, 2026.

Opening hours - from Tuesday 14 October, 2025. Monday Closed. Tuesday – Sunday - 12pm to 6pm

For the Barraba community's information, over the winter months there have been a number of improvements made at Barraba Pool including two new electric BBQs, a new pool blanket on the hydrotherapy pool, a new chemical storage tank, and servicing of the circulation and dosing systems.

(Thank you to Miro for the correct information)



**STREET STALL** Barraba Potters and Craft Guild is holding a street stall on Friday 17th October, commencing at 9a.m. We will have many delicious food items as well as a meat raffle. Come along and grab a bargain!

## For Sale

1971 Cat D4D Bulldozer

\$33000.00

Call John—0427121048



**2025 BARRABA GARDEN RAMBLE Saturday 25<sup>th</sup>**  
**Information pages 4 and 5.**



**BARRABA RSL &  
RECREATIONAL CLUB LTD**

Phone 67821379  
For the information of  
members and guests.

**THIS WEEK**

**THURSDAY 16TH OCTOBER**

Bingo starts 6pm

**FRIDAY 17th OCTOBER**

AIRCOOLED Assembly Raffles

Tickets on sale from 6pm

MEMBERSHIP DRAW \$1100

**SATURDAY 18TH OCTOBER**

**BACK TO THE BUSH AUTO FESTIVAL**

**SUNDAY 19th OCTOBER**

**ANGLERS CLUB**

Raffles on sale from 12pm, drawn 1.30pm

MEMBERSHIP DRAW \$1700

**Monday 20th October—Club closed**

**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**

**BARRABA COMMUNITY NEWS**

COMMUNITY OWNED AND EDITED

**Published by Community College Northern Inland Inc.**

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Printed on site at the Community College. Free publication  
by email or collection from local Barraba main street  
businesses

*Have your say on*  
**TAMWORTH'S  
NIGHT TIME ECONOMY**

Help us shape a strategy that supports a vibrant night-time economy  
that balances fun and vibrancy with safety, accessibility, transport  
and community wellbeing.

Join us for a community drop-in session

Wednesday 22 October, 2025 from 10-11am  
Manilla Mechanics Institute Meeting Room – Manilla Street, Manilla

RSVP using the QR code below.

Can't make the session? Complete our online survey on our Have Your Say Page.

Learn more < [haveyoursay.tamworthnsw.gov.au/night-time-economy-strategy/](http://haveyoursay.tamworthnsw.gov.au/night-time-economy-strategy/)

QR code and Tamworth Regional Council logo.

TRC are holding a pop-up for interested residents in Barraba and Manilla on Wednesday 22 October in Manilla. We also have the survey open for any residents or businesses who cannot attend but would like to have their say.

**CATHOLIC CHURCH TIMES**

Barraba 1st Sunday of the month, Saturday evening  
Mass 6pm. All other Sundays 9am

**BARRABA UNITING CHURCH NOTICES**

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> October

Service time changes to 8:45am for next four  
months. Please note new time.

All Welcome

**ANGLICAN CHURCH TIMES**

**St Laurence's Barraba**

Sunday service at 10.00am

Woodsreef service 2nd Sunday of each month





## Barraba Hospital Auxiliary Fashion Parade



What a great day of fun and community spirit at the Barraba UHA fashion parade on the 11<sup>th</sup> October. Justine Harris (Mistress of Ceremony) kept everyone entertained and Andrea, Penny, Gillian, Toni, Jeanette, Kelly & Karen, our super models, excelled on the catwalk. Thank you all.



Thank you to everyone who attended, and we also welcomed a minibus load of Tamworth UHA ladies, helping to make it a very successful afternoon with a total of \$2992.05 raised.

Thank you to all of our donors, to everyone who helped with the afternoon tea and to the staff at the Barraba Bowling Club for your support.

Thank you also to Judy and Gillian, our scones making experts, for your very informative demonstration on how to make beautiful scones.



The proceeds from the fashion parade are now the start of a fundraising project for a new cardiac monitor, to be purchased for the emergency department at the Barraba MPS.

Finally, again a HUGH thank you to Rhonda Phillips at Frocks 'n' Locks for all of your organization of the fashion parade and for supplying the fashions. Hopefully now you can enjoy a sleep in!

We look forward to the communities continued support for our new fundraising venture, for the Barraba MPS.

**100 Club winners** were - Red ticket: 1st Peter Hancock 2nd June Russell 3rd Kelly Phillips  
Black ticket: 1st Meg Crowley 2nd Lyn Simpson 3rd Sonya Turner





### BARRABA GARDEN RAMBLE

SATURDAY 25th OCTOBER 10am-5pm

THE OAKS            TYCOLAH COTTAGE  
DOONBA            NANGARAH

\$5/garden or \$20 ticket for all four gardens

See more information below



### GARDEN RAMBLE 2025

The local Garden Ramble, or Open Gardens, is just around the corner - **SATURDAY 25<sup>th</sup> October, 10am – 5pm.** Entry fee is \$5 per garden or a \$20 ticket to all gardens. Cash only.

Barraba Cancer Patients Fund Raising Group Inc. (BCPFRG) are again conducting this fundraising event to donate monies onto some of the Australian cancer related and cancer research organizations. The BCPFRG Committee members thank The Rotary Club of Barraba for proudly supporting this day.

With the glorious Spring weather, we have been experiencing, each of the participating gardens is looking superb with their blossoms and fresh growth, as these Winter gardens come to life again for the warmer months.

The participating gardens will have balloons displayed to help with locations – PINK (for breast cancer) and GREY (for ovarian cancer). Each garden is out of town this year, and are as follows:



**'THE OAKS', Lyn and Peter Simpson, 287 The Oaks Road – approx. 5km from Barraba.** Lyn and Peter have been at The Oaks for only four years. There was lawn and a few established trees including two aged Olives, whose

seed was brought back from Egypt during WW1 by old Bill

and Ross McKid. Their brother Ardnell James McKid was killed in action, and the seeds were planted in his memory. Since being at The Oaks, Lyn and Peter have restarted the garden, planting shrubs, flowers and arranging garden ornaments of interest as well throughout the lovely surrounds.

**The rest of the gardens are to the north, north east and east of Barraba, namely:**



**'TYCOLAH COTTAGE', Judy and Bill Crowley, 166 Carisbrooke Road – approx. 20km north**

**of Barraba.** This delightful garden is described as an intimate cottage garden, planted with masses of perennials in mostly soft colours, shady trees and roses. Plantings include many salvias, day lilies, nepeta ad solanum. Visitors are encouraged to sit in the shade and enjoy the ambience. Light refreshments will be available, along with bathroom facilities.



**DOONBA', Mandy and Ian Cabot, 250 Doonba Road – approx. 20km NE of Barraba.** Doonba garden is rambling and relaxed. There is a 100 year old date palm, a vegetable patch, a rampant Wisteria and a resident Bower Bird.

Although there were grand ideas of garden design, the soil, climate and water availability soon came into play. "Sometimes if you encourage the plants to grow and do their own thing, it all comes together!" This superb garden is Mandy's happy place, and she hopes that you enjoy your visit. Bathroom facility.

Lastly, but by no terms least, is the final of the four gardens:





**'NANGARAH', Dale and Peter Hamilton, 307 Linton Road Woodsreef – approx. 23km east of Barraba.** Nangarah garden is an ongoing love. It is described as having "great bones", with mature trees – both native and

deciduous. There are beautiful open spaces with herb beds, shrubs, fruit trees and flowers. The Nangarah Creek 'fences' the garden on the northern side, and has a waterfall. Changing with the everchanging climate including drought, frosts and wet seasons, the garden is also dictated to family needs, and being situated on a working cattle property. Morning tea and light lunch available.

NB. Unfenced creek – children require supervision.

BCPFRG thank each of the gardeners for sharing their gardens so generously. We look forward to seeing as many of the community as possible, to help raise funds for the hope of a Cancer free future, and enjoy a day out immersed in the charm, beauty and awe of nature whilst doing so. The date and times again - **SATURDAY 25<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER, 10am-5pm.**

Refreshments and meals are also available at the usual food outlets in Barraba.

For all enquiries, please contact Lib on 0428 653 639.



**Everyone is welcome to join the Barraba Potters and Craft Guild end of year road trip**

A bus and Crofters Weaving Mill at Spring Ridge, has been booked for Saturday 8th November 2025. You don't have to be a member of the Guild to attend. If you would like to 'Bring a friend' to help with the minimum numbers, that's ok.

The expected departure time from the Gallery is approximately 8am but this is to be confirmed.

Morning tea will be at the weaving mill at 10.30am with a tour of the mill after that. The bus will then take everyone to the Spring Ridge Pub for lunch.

After lunch, (depending on the weather) we will call into "Breeza Station" for a farm tour, on the way home to view what is occurring on an intensive black soil plains cropping farm.

Cost for the day:

1. Bus (limit of 13 people) \$40 each. Payment at the Guild prior to the trip will guarantee your seat but cash on the day to Andrea is possible
2. Morning tea and entry to weaving mill \$12.50 each
3. Lunch at the Spring Ridge Pub (own expense)
4. Free tour of Breeza Station. Thank you to James & Julia Pursehouse.
5. Drinks at the Vic Hotel, Barraba before we venture home. (own expense, optional)

Minimum number is 13 to cover the bus cost so please book in to guarantee a seat. Bookings essential for seat numbers. If you would like to join this group you are most welcome. To book in phone or message Patti on 0459 608 486



### 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](mailto:news@barrabacommunitynews.org.au) or drop into the Community College on the corner of Alice and Fitzroy Sts.



### Golf News

Local golfer Ben Koopman was able to win the prestigious but previously the elusive NSW Sandgreen Championship tournament today. Holding a one-shot lead 1 under par overnight Ben was able to control the nerves to finish with a par round today, carding a total one under par 141 over the 36 holes. Runner up on 142 was Craig Burn who had travelled 14 hours up from St Arnaud, Victoria. A shot further back on 144 was Chris Redmond from Cypress Lakes tied with Phillip Burns from Mitchell Qld.

In the 36 holes net event Reg Walls from Glen Innes and Tamworth/Barraba Jack Boyd both finished with 134 net. On third was local Tom Mellor on 136 with Ben Koopman 137, Campbell Tonkin 137 and Dan Lott all on 137. In the teams event the Barraba team of Kevin Kelaher, Chris Sweeney and Robert Hinton tied first with the Walcha team of Wayne Brennan, Simon Cross and Col Berry on 427.

Other local trophies were Dan Lott winning Saturdays Rd 1 net event with a good 66 net and Tom Mellor winning Sundays Round 2 net with a great 63 net.

NSW Golf presented the Barraba Club with a plaque of appreciation for hosting this event now in its 40th year and complimented the Club on the success of the weekend. There were over 100 golfers from across NSW and interstate. President Will thanked all the Club's volunteers who have worked so hard on bringing the weekend together.

**Your friendly  
local professional**



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**WINTER SPECIAL**

**MITSUBISHI HEAVY INDUSTRIES AIR CONDITIONING**

**KEEP WARM THIS WINTER**

**PH: 0410 522 967**

BARRABA BASED AND WILL TRAVEL TO SURROUNDING AREAS

**BK ELECTRICAL+AIR CONDITIONING**

ONE TRADESMAN WITH BOTH ELECTRICAL & REFRIGERATION LICENSES

|                                                                                          |                                                                                         |                                                                                          |
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| 2.5kw Mitsubishi Heavy Industries A/C<br>Fully Installed - Back to Back<br><b>\$2270</b> | 5 kw Mitsubishi Heavy Industries A/C<br>Fully Installed - Back to Back<br><b>\$2870</b> | 7.1kw Mitsubishi Heavy Industries A/C<br>Fully Installed - Back to Back<br><b>\$3350</b> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**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**



## History Notes

In a couple of weeks descendants of the Dean and the Smith families are to visit Barraba to find more information about their ancestors. Both William and Sarah Dean and James C. and Eva Smith lived in the town of Barraba for the rest of their lives after purchasing a flourishing general store in 1900.

We have in our possession a copy of the advertisement acknowledging the change of ownership from Excell & Malcolm to Messrs. Dean and Smith. The former owners were hoping that Dean and Smith would be able to carry on the existing friendly relations with the customers. The advertisement which covered a large part of the page in the Barraba and Manilla News dated 11<sup>th</sup> August 1900 stated that W.H. Dean had a reference of twelve years with an Armidale firm and J.C. Smith had a five-year reference with the same business. Dean and Smith started their business with a special discount sale on 11<sup>th</sup> August 1900.

Although I have not yet found the actual notice when Dean & Smith took over, I am pretty sure that Dean & Smith took over on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1900. In the early years it seems that the store was run by the new owners with little reference to any government department.

However, things changed in 1913 when it seems that the business became a company. Shareholders named in the account book seemed to be Mr Dean and Mr Smith, their wives, Eva Smith and Sarah Dean together with J. Scholes from Armidale and G. Parker-Jones of Bondi and Edward P.M. Sheedy, public accountant of Sydney. The first recorded meeting was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1913.

As well as running their Barraba shop, both Mr Dean and Mr Smith joined several other Barraba farmers/businessmen in a Queensland property known as Nelia Ponds and later also Glen Lyon. This venture seemed to be quite profitable at first but later the company withdrew from the venture and it is thought that the profits from the venture enabled homes such as Bronte, Nelia and Wonga were able to be built.

Hopefully there will be more on these families next week.





# Save water and money!

## Sign up to:

- Track your water usage anytime, anywhere
- Save water, save money
- Better water management for a sustainable future
- Find and fix leaks early!

**MyTRC WATER PORTAL**

Sign up online

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

**Tamworth**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL

To get started  
scan me!



**Barraba**

Represent  
your community

*I have an idea!*  
*What a great plan...*  
*Love it!*

Tamworth Regional Council is calling for **Expressions of Interest (EOI)** from residents who want to represent their community by becoming a member of the **Barraba Precinct Advisory Committee**.

The committee will be a vital link between Council and the community in ensuring the voices of our towns, villages, and surrounding districts are heard on strategic forward planning matters.

If you're passionate about your community, this is your chance to get involved.

Scan the QR code or visit  
[www.tamworth.nsw.gov.au/about/forms/...](http://www.tamworth.nsw.gov.au/about/forms/...)  
to apply before  
Tuesday 21 October, 2025.



Scan the QR  
code to find  
out more and  
to apply.



## Electronic waste

### National E-waste Day - 14 October 2025

Did you know that electronic waste is one of the fastest-growing waste streams in the world? From old phones and laptops to cords and TVs, many of these items can be recycled instead of ending up in landfill.

This National E-Waste Day, take a moment to check what's sitting in your cupboards or sheds and see if it can be responsibly recycled. By doing so, you'll help recover valuable materials and protect our environment for future generations.

Drop-off for FREE at the Community Recycling Centre (CRC).  
Tamworth Waste Management Facility, 123a Forest Road,  
Tamworth 2340





## Forty per cent of Hunter New England women overdue for breast screening

This Breast Cancer Awareness Month, eligible women from Hunter New England Local Health District are being urged to book a free mammogram, with 40 per cent of women in the region overdue for their two-yearly breast cancer screening.

For women aged 50-74, a breast screen every two years, through a population-based screening program like BreastScreen NSW, is still the best way to detect breast cancer early – before it can be seen or felt.

Bec Delaporte, Acting Manager of BreastScreen NSW Hunter New England, said with almost 900 local women expected to be diagnosed with breast cancer this year, women need to put themselves first and book a screening. “If you’re aged 50 to 74, make breast screening a priority. It only takes 20 minutes and a doctor’s referral is not required,” Ms Delaporte said. “Early detection significantly increases a person’s chance of survival and can greatly reduce the need for invasive treatment like a mastectomy.”

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and BreastScreen NSW is encouraging clients, staff and the community to “Tell a Friend” about the importance of regular screening and how to book an appointment.

A record 36,500 women across NSW booked their breast screen in October 2024. This year, the “Be A Friend, Tell A Friend” promotion encourages conversations so more women book this potentially lifesaving appointment.

Professor Tracey O’Brien AM, NSW Chief Cancer Officer and CEO of the Cancer Institute NSW said as a community we need to take the threat of breast cancer seriously. “We all have a role to play in lessening the impact of breast cancer. Talk to the women in your life and support them to be screened,” Professor O’Brien said. “In one simple moment, our lives could be turned upside down. That’s why I urge all women not to take their health for granted and to make time for the simple screening test that could save your life.”

Breast cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in women in Australia and the main factors that influence risk include being a woman and getting older. Women aged 50 – 74 years are recommended to have a breast screen every two years. BreastScreen NSW recommends Aboriginal women start screening at 40 years. New videos by Aboriginal

women which explain why breast screening is important are available on the BreastScreen NSW website.

Any woman who has noticed a change in their breasts, like a lump, should see their doctor without delay. For more information and to make an appointment at a local BreastScreen NSW clinic or mobile van, call 13 20 50 or book online at [www.breastscreen.nsw.gov.au](http://www.breastscreen.nsw.gov.au).

For more information about the Be A Friend Tell A Friend promotion visit

<https://www.breastscreen.nsw.gov.au/breast-cancer-awareness-month/>



## WATER NIGHT

In 2020, The Water Conservancy launched Water Night to help people improve water knowledge, understand where water comes from and the importance of valuing water more in their home.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

From 5–10pm, switch off your taps and discover how often you really reach for water. It’s a fun, eye-opening way to practice “water mindfulness” and grow your water knowledge.

### How can my Household take part in Water Night?

This year’s theme is From Habit to Hero — because small changes to our everyday water habits can make a big impact. From **5–10pm on Thursday 23 October**, switch off your taps and discover how often you really reach for water. Sign up your household for the event and raise your water awareness. If you’re under 18 please ensure that you have an adult supervising you and that your parent or guardian registers on your behalf.

Go to the “WATER NIGHT” website and sign up.

## Respected farming leader Michael Tooth leaves ground breaking legacy

by RK Crosby, New England Times.

One of the founding fathers of NSW Farmers, Michael Tooth of Armidale, has passed away aged 94.

NSW Farmers' President Xavier Martin said the organisation was saddened to hear of his passing, listing his many contributions that helped shape the modern farming movement as we know it today. "Michael was part of the team who led the amalgamation of the previous NSW Graziers' Association, United Farmers' and Woolgrowers' Association and The Riverina Graziers' Association in 1978 to form the Livestock and Grain Producers' Association of NSW. Later, as President of the new Association, Michael saw to its renaming as NSW Farmers' Association in 1987, in recognition of its wider appeal to all farming industries," he said.

Together with another former president, Michael Davidson, and CEO John White, Michael Tooth was a driving force from NSW who designed and established the National Farmers' Federation (NFF) in 1979, joining into one body the many farm groups that had existed nationally at the time.

"Michael was President of NSW Farmers at the time of the farmer's rally in Canberra in 1985. Working together with the Association's then-Vice President, Peter Taylor, Michael sparked up the farm network leading to around 25,000 farmers from NSW joining the rally. He then worked to establish the formidable Australian Farmers' Fighting Fund (AFFF) and served as an inaugural trustee taking on ground breaking legal action in various cases to assert farmers' interests, including the Dollar Sweets case and the Mudginberri dispute."

Martin said much of the present financial stability of NSW Farmers can be put down to Michael's leadership of patient negotiations with Sydney developer, Sid Londish, to sell the Association's original head office. For many years, the price achieved was the Australian record per square metre Tooth was notably a strong advocate for environmentally sound farming practices. Under his presidency of NSW Farmers, and at his urging, many livestock farmers joined the RSPCA to help maintain proper standards of animal welfare. After being elected to the vice presidency of National Farmers Federation in 1988, Tooth championed farmers being in the drivers seat of environmental concerns, including telling students and young farmers that ecologically sound farming is more profitable, and insisting that

"He will be sadly missed and we are so grateful for his achievements on our behalf. I extend the condolences of all

members to his family and friends," Mr Xavier said. Michael maintained a keen and close interest in NSW Farmers' Association after his retirement. After relocating the family from their property at Barraba to Armidale so that his wife Patricia could seek breast cancer treatment he was quite attached to Armidale, supporting a number of community causes such as NERAM. He outlived Patricia, as well as his children Peter, Nick and Susan. He is survived by his son Simon.

A service will be held in the Sutton Forrest All Saints Anglican Church from 11am on Wednesday, October 15, to celebrate Mr Tooth's life.

### EMERGENCY SERVICES CONTACT LIST

|                                   |             |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Ambulance                         | 000         |
| Fire                              | 000         |
| Police                            | 67900360    |
| VRA                               | 000         |
| Barraba Police Station            | 67821003    |
| Barraba Fire Brigade              | 02 57328415 |
| Barraba Health Service (Hospital) | 67822500    |
| Barraba Medical Centre (GP)       | 67821621    |
| Barraba Vet Service               | 0429192265  |
| Essential Energy                  | 132080      |
| Beyond Blue                       | 1300224636  |
| Lifeline                          | 131114      |
| NRMA                              | 131122      |
| SES Barraba                       | 132500      |
| Tamworth Regional Council         |             |
| Emergency Number                  | 1300733625  |
| Council Office                    | 67821105    |

### JPs in Barraba

Mrs Pamela Kathryn Mary Urquhart 0267821480  
Mrs Patti Elizabeth Crowley 0267821795  
Mrs Elizabeth Ann Sawyer 0267825334  
Mrs Sonia Gaye Simpson 0267831382  
Mr Owen David Rigby 0400020307  
Mr Neville Alexander Moore 0418251280  
Mrs Tanya Mary Clarke 0427949127  
Mrs Patricia Merris Currell 0428268632  
Mrs Janene Helen Randall 0428832282  
Mrs Pauline Ann McIver 0429671294  
Mr Stephen Laurence Ely 0438427033  
Ms Marilou Simpson



## **17 older Australians die from falls every day. Here are 5 things you can do to reduce your risk**

*Anne Tiedemann, Professor of Physical Activity and Health,  
Sydney School of Public Health, University of Sydney*

*Cathie Sherrington, Professor, Institute for Musculoskeletal  
Health, School of Public Health, University of Sydney*

Every day in Australia, more than 400 people aged over 65 are admitted to hospital due to a fall. That's around one person every four minutes.

Although anyone can experience a fall, they're a common cause of disability and loss of independence in older age.

Sadly, 17 older people die as a direct result of falls every day in Australia, often due to head trauma or internal bleeding. Many of these people are dying early, not when their "time has come".

The good news is that many falls are preventable. Here are five key actions you can take to reduce your risk of falls.

### **1. Do balance challenging exercises**

Recent Australian fall prevention guidelines recommend all people aged 65 years and over, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 50 years and over, should take part in exercise to prevent falls, even if they have never fallen.

In particular, exercise that targets balance and strength is crucial for preventing falls. These are exercises you do while standing, with the feet close together or while standing on one leg (if it's safe to do so).



These exercises should include controlled movement of the body (such as leaning, reaching and stepping). Examples include heel raises, squats, lunges and stepping in different directions.

To gain the most benefits, fall prevention exercises should be performed at least three times per week.

People who have already had regular falls may benefit from specialised advice from a physiotherapist, exercise physiologist or trained exercise instructor.

### **2. Have your medications reviewed**

Certain medications, such as sleeping tablets, as well as taking multiple medications, can increase your risk of falling.

Older people should discuss and have their medications reviewed each year or after a change in their health, by a GP in collaboration with a pharmacist. Where appropriate, a health-care professional may be able suggest changes which minimise the use of medicines that increase a person's risk of falling.

### **3. Maximise the safety of your home**

About half of all falls that result in hospital admissions occur in and around the home.

Older people at a higher risk of falls – such as those with significant vision impairment or who have poor mobility – can benefit from a home safety intervention. This would involve:

- an assessment of their home environment
- advice about how to safely undertake daily tasks at home and elsewhere, such as safe mobility on stairs and the use of walking aids where needed
- suggested changes to the home such as installation of grab rails, improved lighting and non-slip mats in the bathroom.

This may be more effective at reducing the risk of falls when provided by an occupational therapist.

Even for older people who have not fallen before, it's a good idea to reduce clutter, ensure good lighting in the house and remove trip hazards such as electrical cords in walkways.

### **4. Get your eyes tested regularly**

Good vision is essential for maintaining balance, seeing obstacles and moving around safely. Cataracts, a clouding of the lens of the eye, blur your vision and can make you sensitive to light and glare. This common eye condition, associated with age, reduces your ability to spot hazards in the environment.

Research shows having cataracts removed reduces the risk of falls. Fall prevention guidelines recommend a yearly eye check with an optometrist to detect cataracts and other eye conditions.

There's also evidence wearing bifocal or multifocal glasses can increase the risk of falls by blurring edges close to the feet (such as the edge of a step or gutter). For this reason the Australian fall prevention guidelines recommend active older people use single-lens distance glasses (rather than bifocal, multifocal or progressive lenses) when doing activities outdoors.

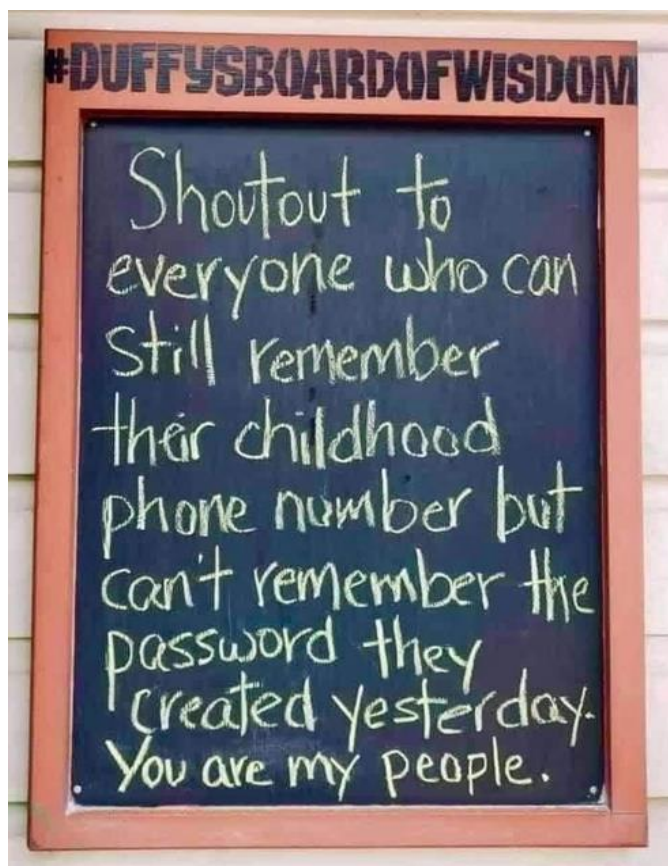
It's also wise for anyone getting a new glasses prescription to be especially careful while they adjust to the new glasses.

#### **5. See a podiatrist if you have painful feet**

Healthy and strong feet are important for maintaining good balance and avoiding falls. Research suggests if people with foot problems or painful feet see a podiatrist to have these problems treated, this can reduce their risk of falls.

It's also important to wear sturdy, well-fitted shoes that have a low, wide heel for greater stability, and a sole with tread to prevent slips.

Don't wait for a fall to happen before you take action. Every step you take today to reduce your risk of falls is a powerful move toward staying safe and independent.



#### **RECENT ANNIVERSARIES**

- the first publication of the Guinness Book of World Records (1955)
- Pharmacists John Lea & William Perrins inventing Worcestershire sauce (1837)
- the founding of Melbourne, Australia (1835)
- the opening of the Sydney General Post Office (1874)
- the US, Australia and New Zealand signing the ANZUS defence treaty (1951)
- English astronomer Edmond Halley first observing the comet named after him (1682)
- the start of the Blitz when Germany bombed London for 57 nights as the Nazis prepared for an invasion (1940)
- SpaceX's Polaris Dawn attempting the first private spacewalk (2024)
- Enid Blyton publishing the first of her Famous Five children's novels (1942)
- the last known smallpox death - that of medical photographer Janet Parker who was infected in a British lab (1978)
- Scottish bacteriologist Alexander Fleming discovering penicillin (1928)
- New Zealand becoming the first country to grant all women the right to vote (1893)
- the first documented use of emoticons by computer scientist Scott Fahlman (1982) :-)
- the publication of a genomic study finding Indigenous Australians are the oldest known civilisation on earth in Nature (2016)
- the Mars Orbiter Mission making India the first Asian nation to reach Mars' orbit, and the first nation in the world to do so on its first attempt (2014)
- anaesthetic ether being used for the first time by American dentist Dr William Morton (1846)
- Henry Ford introducing the Model T car (1908)
- Simon & Schuster's publication of the Little Golden Books series (1942)
- 22 Nazi leaders being found guilty of war crimes at the Nuremberg war trials (1946)
- the start of the Howard Government's gun buyback scheme, following the Port Arthur Massacre (1996)
- the reunification of East and West Germany, now known as the Day of German Unity (1990)
- the formation of the Women's Social and Political Union by Emmeline Pankhurst to fight for women's rights in Britain (1903)
- Scottish chemist Charles Macintosh begins selling raincoats (macs) after patenting them (1823)