



BARRABA COMMUNITY NEWS

COMMUNITY OWNED AND EDITED

FREE LOCAL NEWSPAPER

Wednesday 29th APRIL 2026

You're invited to Tamworth Regional Council's

RAY WALSH HOUSE COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSION

**Tamworth Town Hall
Thursday 14 May
5-7pm**

Tamworth
REGIONAL COUNCIL



You're invited to attend a **Community Information Session** about **Ray Walsh House**. 5pm....Thursday 14 May at Tamworth Town Hall. Questions can be pre-submitted via the Tamworth Regional Council website.

<https://www.tamworth.nsw.gov.au/about/the-council/ray-walsh-house-remediation>

Barraba Family Doctor Practice Notice

Please note that the surgery will be closed from Thursday 14th May to Friday 15th May (inclusive). We will re-open on Monday 18th May.

Dr Wearne will be consulting at the practice, covering Dr Hein while he is on leave.

If you require a repeat prescription or any medication that may be due during this time, please **phone the surgery to book an appointment** before the closure.

The surgery will also be closed on Friday 22nd May, reopening on Monday 25th May.

Thank you Barraba Family Doctor

Barraba Catholic Women's Raffle Results

1st prize: Queen St café.

2nd prize: Kaye Sawyer.

Many thanks to the numerous people who supported our stall and we trust you will enjoy your purchases. Thank you for your generosity!



Barraba UHA Auxiliary Street Stall

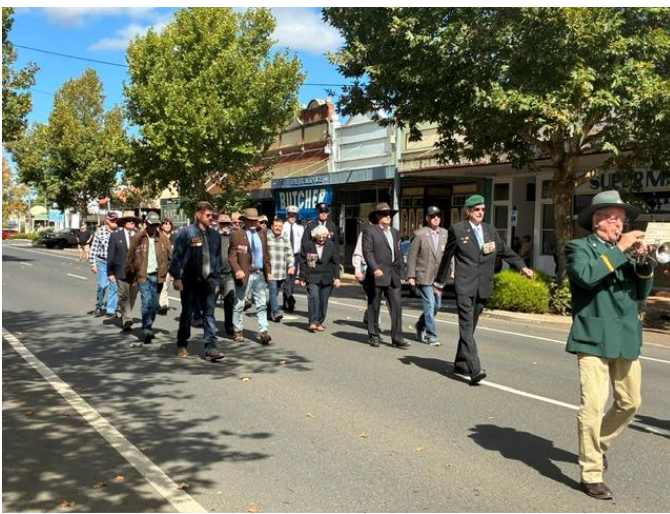
7th of May from 9am.

All donations will be greatly appreciated.

Ecological Burn Notice

Please be advised that Whitehaven Coal will be undertaking burn preparation and cool season Ecological Burns on the following Biodiversity Properties "Nindethana", "Rosevale", "Wirradale", and "Yarrowonga" between 30th March and 26th June 2026. For further information, please contact Whitehaven Biodiversity on 0488 407 000.

Barraba ANZAC Day March 2026



ANZAC DAY THANK YOU

Following ANZAC Day, I would like to thank many people for an excellent turn out.

First of all, to the organisers, who made the day possible. I can't list every name as it would take half a column on its own.

To the remaining Veterans of Barraba who marched, thank you very much. We may have been a bit of a motley crew but we held our heads high and enjoyed the March.

Next, I give my deepest gratitude to the Students and Teachers from Barraba Central School, St Joseph's Primary School, Barraba Pre School and other Students from out of the area.

I enjoyed talking to the Students and asked about the medals they were wearing. When asked, I could see the pride in their smiles and that is one of the things that really made my day.

I also thank the people of Barraba and the surrounding area. It was a great turn out. I hope to see more Veterans next year, so spread the word around please.

It was a privilege to be nominated the ANZAC Day March Sergeant.

Many thanks everyone and see you again next year.

David Vinen

After 110 years of Anzac Days, new research shows Australians remain convinced of its importance.

Nicole Townsend, Lecturer in War Studies, UNSW Sydney

110 years ago, this week, Anzac Day was held for the first time. It has been observed annually ever since.

Today, Anzac Day has emerged as an unofficial national day. But what do Australians think about the most significant event in the national commemorative calendar?

Anzac Day important, but engagement levels lag behind

Last year, the War Studies Research Group conducted a national survey, examining public attitudes towards military history. The survey involved 1,500 people and was completed in late February and early March 2025.

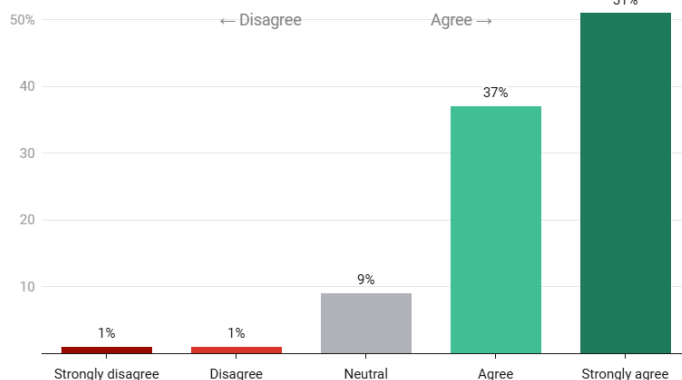
Anzac Day remains deeply contested. Academics have shown how critics argue the occasion glorifies war and obscures its more challenging aspects, including veterans' health issues.

At the time of the Gallipoli centenary in 2015, questions were raised about "centenary fatigue" — the idea that the Australian public would grow tired of commemoration after four years of centenary activities, and disengage from Anzac Day. Reporting has since highlighted differing opinions among young Australians, and studies have identified reduced turnout at Anzac Day services.

Despite these concerns, our survey found the Australian public overwhelmingly believes in the day's importance within contemporary society. Nearly 90% of respondents said Anzac Day was important to Australians today.

Almost 90% of Australians believe Anzac Day is important

Responses to the statement: Anzac Day is important to Australians today?

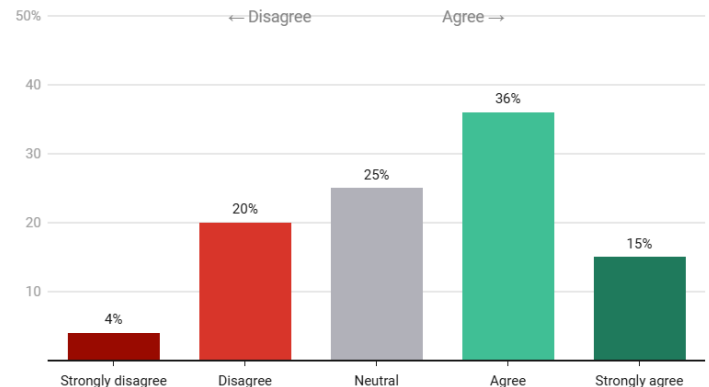


When it comes to engaging with Anzac Day activities, however, responses were more varied. Around two thirds had attended an Anzac Day service at least once. More than

half also regularly engaged with the Anzac Day-related activities. Yet almost a quarter said they don't regularly engage with Anzac Day activities, and 35% admitted they had never attended an Anzac Day service.

Half of Australians regular engage in Anzac Day activities

Responses to the statement: I regularly engage in Anzac Day activities



This tracks with other research, which shows that the number of Australians attending Anzac Day dawn services between 2015 and 2019 dropped by 70%.

Younger Australians consider Anzac Day important

Our survey didn't look at the reasons for engaging (or not), but lagging participation in Anzac Day events has been linked to "broader community disinterest", particularly among younger Australians. Yet our survey found younger Australians overwhelmingly consider Anzac Day important. About 85% of those aged under 40 responded favourably — not much lower than older Australians.

The youngest Australians (18–29) in our study were also only marginally less likely than their older counterparts to have attended an Anzac Day service at least once: 72%, compared with around 75% of those aged 60 or over.

Under-40s are also the most likely to engage regularly with Anzac Day activities. This is likely influenced by the fact they are more likely to be physically capable of participating, compared with older Australians.

Veterans crucial to keeping memory alive

Veterans have long been the cornerstone of Anzac Day, whether at the dawn service or Anzac Day marches — and Australians consider them crucial to commemoration.

Our research showed 85% of Australians supported their role in keeping the memory of past conflicts alive. Nearly 70% also found it easier to remember past conflicts when veterans are alive to tell their stories. This opinion was shared across age groups, genders and locations. It also tracks with some of the broader findings in our survey,

including that Australians are most interested in personal stories of war.

While Australians believe in veterans' role in keeping the memory of their experiences alive, this doesn't mean they receive a great deal of information about military history from them. Just under half of Australians trust veterans and veterans' associations as sources of information on military history, but only 15% said most of their knowledge came from them.

There were also notable age-related differences in this regard. Around a quarter of Australians aged 60 or over identified veterans or their associations as a key source of information on military history. By contrast, only 8% of those aged 30–39 said the same, along with 13% of those aged 18–29.

Crucially, veterans and veterans' associations were not in the top three sources of military history knowledge for any age group.

The challenges that lay ahead

This raises questions about the role of veterans in increasing public awareness of their contributions and experiences.

Others have emphasised the risk posed by the loss of "tangible connections" to veterans of past conflicts, both distant and recent. In 2025 it was estimated there remained around 1,000 second world war veterans in Australia. The last Australian veteran of the first world war died in 2009.



As veterans from the world wars die out, it remains more difficult to keep their stories alive. Australian War Memorial

This means we are now reliant on recorded interviews and written testimony for personal insights into both world wars. Still, both world wars benefit from significant exposure in popular culture and the dominance of the world wars in history.

For more recent conflicts, the challenge is greater. Public awareness of recent conflicts is lacking compared to the world wars, and unlike the second world war, they rarely feature in popular culture. The Anzac legend of the "exceptional digger" also fails to reflect the professional soldier of the modern Australian Defence Force and recent conflicts.

Whether it is distant or more recent conflicts, the voices of veterans are important in maintaining the memory of past conflicts. It is important we ensure their voices are heard now, and recorded for future generations.



BARRABA RSL & RECREATIONAL CLUB LTD

Phone 67821379

For the information of members and guests.

THIS WEEK

THURSDAY 30th April BINGO

First game starts at 6pm

FRIDAY 1st May

RUBY MAE'S RAFFLES

Tickets on sale from 5.30pm

Membership Draw \$1800

SUNDAY 3rd May

AIRCOOLED ASSEMBLY RAFFLES

Membership Draw \$1200

BISTRO HOURS

Phone 0427330808

DINE IN OR TAKEAWAY

DAILY BLACKBOARD SPECIALS

PIZZAS MADE TO ORDER

MONDAY/TUESDAY/WEDNESDAY: CLOSED

THURS/FRI/SAT: LUNCH 12-2PM DINNER FROM 6PM

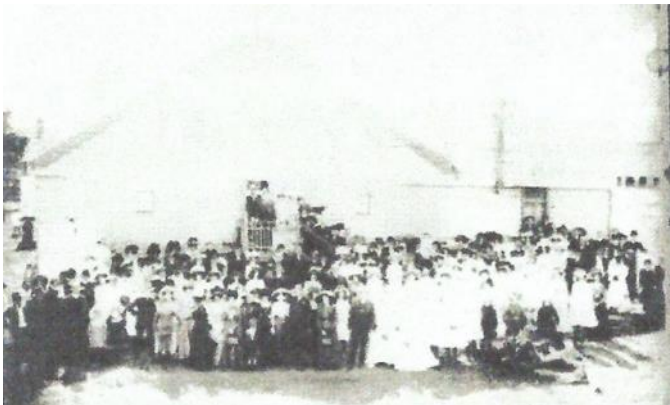
SUNDAY: 12-2PM



School of Arts – Barraba

As far as is known, there was only ever one School of Arts building in Barraba. It still exists and stands at what is now 19 Maude Street, next to the old Fire Station and just to the west of the main street. While no specific date for its construction has been found, it is mentioned in the Statistical Register of New South Wales for 1885, suggesting that it probably came into being a year or so before that date.

The building was a wooden one which, it would seem from an early faded wedding photograph, had a landing on its eastern side. A reference in the Manilla Express of 8 April, 1899 comments that “Mr Myers is to add and alter the School of Arts”. These additions consisted of a new wing to house a library and reading room. If it was typical of other such institutions in the area at the time, it is highly likely that the alterations and additions also included some sort of provision for a games room. A brick façade was added to the building in about 1960 and its appearance has remained essentially unchanged since that time.



Its Story

The Barraba School of Arts, known in its earliest days as the Barraba Mechanics’ Institute, served as a general meeting place and provided a reading service to the community. It is known that a library was in operation in 1897 and that it was enlarged during the building extensions of 1899. By 1904, the library contained a thousand volumes, and it was still operational during the Second World War. There is mention in 1940 of the “regular addition of new volumes” and it is known that a Mr Rowland held the position of Librarian in 1941.

In 1897, the operation of the Barraba Mechanics’ Institute was in the hands of a sizeable committee of significant townspeople, suggesting that it was serving useful

community function. This committee was made up of:
Mr Clements – Shopkeeper
Mr Dawson – Bank Manager
Mr Douglas
Mr Gordon
Dr Hart – Medical Practitioner
Mr Morrow - Shop Owner
Mr Rabe – Publican
Mr Scheerer – Shopkeeper
An effective committee was still in operation in 1910 with Mr Hadley, a Bank Manager, as its President and Mr W.D. Harris as its Secretary.



For much of its existence, the Mechanics’ Institute served as a popular venue for dances, socials, concerts, and meetings. Eighty-nine-year-old Mrs Jesser Crowley recalls that it had a very good dancing floor and that during the 1930s, it was common for Saturday night dances to be held there. She relates that the dancing would go on, uninterrupted, until midnight at which point, supper would be served. It would have been a waste of good dancing time to have stopped for supper before midnight!

Prior to 1922, quite large balls and dances were held in the Mechanics’ Institute but after the construction of the Clifton Hall in that year, the Institute building was used more for smaller dances and functions. Its restricted size was highlighted in a Barraba Chronicle advertisement for a soldier’s farewell on 6 March, 1941:

“Children under sixteen who are not relatives of the soldiers, will not be admitted owing to limited dancing space available.”

The Mechanics’ Institute building was also used as a venue for church services from 14 December, 1905 to 25 July, 1906 while a nearby St Laurence’s Church was being rebuilt. Later, in November, 1941, there is also mention of classes being held in the School of Arts “by the University of Sydney” but there are no details of what these classes may have involved.

Its Later Use

The building was taken over as a Scout Hall during the early 1950s and was used for this purpose for about twenty years. It was during this time that the present brick façade was added. After the Scouts ceased to use the building, it was used as a storage facility by a dealer in second-hand goods. It was then the headquarters of the Barraba Sia Baba religious group.

Letter from Wendy Kilroy (Hatch)

Reading the hard copy of the Barraba Community News dated Wednesday 1st April 2026 in my home in Tasmania, the photos on page 9 stirred my memories of my flood experience in 1964. The bottom photo on the left is of our house at 20 Queen St.



Our family had been on our annual holiday to Gosford and had arrived home the evening before the flood. Next morning, as the rain continued, our parents decided to leave me, 11 years old, with my 4-year-old brother Douglas, and my sister, Michelle, who was 3, as well as our grandfather Paddy Starr, 80 years old. Mum and Dad left us briefly while they went to assist our great aunt in Cherry Lane, and to check on my aunt and uncle's house next door in Rodney St. My aunt and uncle were holidaying in Port Macquarie. I'm not sure what time my parents left but shortly after, the water started rising rapidly.

Our grandfather, who was blind, was very nervous and kept asking me how far the water was coming up. He kept budgerigars and his little dog Jacky, was tied up in her kennel. By this time the water had already claimed Jacky and all the poultry our mother kept. The budgerigars were released by Des Kelaher swimming in and opening their cage. The water was so high by now that our parents were unable to get back to the house and the house next door was inundated almost to the rafters.

Thankfully, help arrived. The men from White's Garage came to our aid, and we were guided through the flood water

which was up past our thighs. Fortunately, our mother had not unpacked our suitcases (they were called "ports" back then) when we got home the previous evening. This was contrary to her usual practise of unpacking everything as soon as we arrived home. On this occasion, it worked in our favour. However, as the helpers were grabbing anything they could salvage, including the suitcases, which my mother had left on the top of a bunk bed, one of the helpers had the misfortune to drop one of them back into the flood water. As for the house next door, nothing could be salvaged including our cousin's much loved new green and white holden car which was locked in the garage.

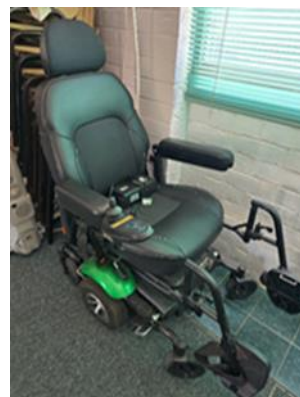
The water rose and receded quickly which was a blessing, but the devastation on returning to the house was sobering. So much silt; the piano through one of the walls; bedding sodden and saggy; furniture displaced and drawers of linen and clothing saturated. Preserves, jams and pantry items were scattered everywhere, some broken, others intact, but not much to salvage.

As in all country towns and communities, when the chips are down people band together to help one another, which was evident after the flood. I remember, for weeks after the flood, items being returned, washed, ironed and starched. Documents and photos dried out and curled but were saved. Some furniture items were cleaned and placed in the sun to dry. I'm sure there is still silt in the walls of 20 Queen St.

Mike Artis' comments (page 10, 1st April 2026 edition) also revived memories of the trucks lined up outside our house, waiting their turn to weigh and unload their cargoes of wheat and wool. The sight of those trucks, laden with their bounty, remains as a reminder of how rich and fertile the land around Barraba was and still is, and the stamina and resilience required by the farming community to grow such high-quality produce.

Wendy Kilroy (Hatch), Westbury, Tasmania.

For Sale:



Merits Maverick 10 power wheelchair.

5 years old, excellent condition with brand new batteries.

\$1,500

Contact Amanda Koopman
0429 958 816

MUDDY MAYHEM

The Aircooled Assembly Inc team are devastated to let you all know that Muddy MAYhem 2026, to be held on the 1st & 2nd May, is cancelled.

Despite every effort made by the Aircooled Assembly Inc, late on the evening of Monday the 20th April correspondence from Tamworth Regional Council (TRC) was received that Muddy MAYhem was cancelled. While our club had our Insurance, Risk Assessments and First Aid in place, TRC's risk department could not obtain what they required from their Insurance for Muddy MAYhem to be held on TRC grounds.

Please know, that everyone's safety is paramount to the Aircooled Assembly Inc. We are invested on rescheduling Muddy MAYhem. Following the notification that our event was cancelled, members of the Aircooled Assembly Inc phoned and emailed everyone who had pre entered the event, over 40 drivers of the 35 cars entered as well as many, many entrants.

We feel the disappointment from you all. We apologize to:

- ✓ our major sponsors Opportunity Knocks Op Shop and Ampol Barraba
- ✓ the members of our community who come and support the event last year or intended to support Muddy Mayham 2026
- ✓ our community groups such as Rotary who cover the onsite food
- ✓ the coffee vendor, skip bin hire businesses and Keith's Firewood
- ✓ the accommodations in town who had multiple bookings for our event
- ✓ the retail business who will miss the additional trade
- ✓ the food business in town who will not have the extra covers through their cafe or restaurants

- ✓ The Showground Users Group who will miss the hire fees
- ✓ The Barraba Central School who will not raise funds from the return and earn
- ✓ our major raffle donors Bigbore Industries, Croc Rods, Cool Az Hotrods and AM Lines along with our many many donors to the nightly table raffles
- ✓ The car owners who built vehicles especially for our event, overhauled and repair their existing cars, in addition to arranging for their friends, families and group members to come along
- ✓ those who were coming from as far north as Russell Island and as far south at Wodonga and everywhere in-between
- ✓ to the many who booked barges, took annual leave and were to close their business to attend.

We are invested in having this event rescheduled and will keep you updated. Muddy MAYhem is a great event on its own but is also important to help continue Back to the Bush to the standard it is now. Along with the sponsors that keep Back to the Bush free, Muddy MAYhem helps fund the event.

Many people have asked what they can do to help.

Assembly Inc welcomes a letter/email from individuals/clubs/families/friends etc regardless of if you're from Barraba or beyond, a car entrant or a spectator, a community group or a business. We would really appreciate hearing from you how last year's event impacted you if you come and/or what impact this event cancellation has had. Please address the letters to the Aircooled Assembly Inc and email them to aircooledassembly@gmail.com or hand into a Club member.

We want to express our thanks to all for expressing your appreciation in all our efforts to bring this event to you and Barraba, we now know just how much Barraba and surrounds supports Muddy MAYhem. Thank you.



BARRABA CARAVAN PARK

We had the privilege of having Bellingen Bird Watch group stay with us for a few days. Amazingly the list is all the birds that were seen during their visit with a 50km radius

Barraba Campout – April 2026 (3 days total)

In bold – Top 10 species for the Campout
Total 97 species

BIRD LIST

Brown Quail	Azure Kingfisher	Pied Butcherbird
Australian Wood Duck	Laughing Kookaburra	Australian Magpie
Grey Teal	Sacred Kingfisher	Pied Currawong
Pacific Black Duck	White-throated Treecreeper	Grey Fantail
Australasian Grebe	Brown Treecreeper	Willie Wagtail
Feral Pigeon (Rock Dove)	Superb Fairy-wren	Australian Raven
Spotted Dove	White-browed Scrubwren	Little Raven
Common Bronzewing	Speckled Warbler	Restless Flycatcher
Crested Pigeon	Weebill	Magpie-lark
Peaceful Dove	Striated Thornbill	White-winged Chough
Little Pied Cormorant	Yellow Thornbill	Apostlebird
Australian Pelican	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Jack Winter
White-faced Heron	Buff-rumped Thornbill	Hooded Robin
Black-shouldered Kite	Spotted Pardalote	Eastern Yellow Robin
Swamp Harrier	Striated Pardalote	Silvereye
Wedge-tailed Eagle	Eastern Spinebill	White-backed Swallow
Nankeen Kestrel	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Welcome Swallow
Brown Falcon	Singing Honeyeater	Tree Martin
Dusky Moorhen	White-eared Honeyeater	Mistletoebird
Eurasian Coot	White-plumed Honeyeater	Zebra Finch
Black-fronted Dotterel	Noisy Miner	Double-barred Finch
Masked Lapwing	Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	Red-browed Finch
Galah	Blue-faced Honeyeater	Diamond Firetail
Little Corella	Noisy Friarbird	House Sparrow
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Striped Honeyeater	Common Blackbird
Cockatiel	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Common Starling
Rainbow Lorikeet	White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike	Common Myna
Musk Lorikeet	Eastern Crested Shrike-tit	Brown Thornbill
Australian King-Parrot	Golden Whistler	Red Wattlebird
Red-winged Parrot	Rufous Whistler	
Crimson Rosella	Grey Shrike-thrush	
Eastern Rosella	Olive-backed Oriole	
Red-rumped Parrot	Dusky Woodswallow	
Turquoise Parrot	Grey Butcherbird	

CATHOLIC CHURCH TIMES

Barraba 1st Sunday of the month, Saturday evening
Mass 5pm. (Note the time change)
All other Sundays 9am

BARRABA UNITING CHURCH NOTICES

Sunday 3rd May – 8.45am
Please note new time for the next few months.
All welcome

ANGLICAN CHURCH TIMES

St Laurence's Barraba
Sunday service at 10.00am
Woodsreef 11.30am, 2nd Sunday of each month



Senior Citz News

Hello Everyone

The meeting on Friday was very well attended, thank you members.

Our aim at the moment, is Market Day at the Seniors Centre on Saturday 2nd May, 9am to 12md. There will be a sausage sizzle for those who feel the munchies coming on. Those who would like a stall it's not too late to take part.

Our Mother's Day raffle will be also be drawn on Saturday. If you'd like to get something a bit special, do come along and I'm sure you will be able to find just what you're looking for.

Handicraft Day on Wednesdays are quite well attended. You don't have to be a member of Seniors to take part in activities. Just drop in, have a yarn and a cuppa.

Bingo on Fridays is still a popular pastime, numbers are very steady.

This is my bit for this week, to those on the sick list, a get well soon wish to you. People celebrating a birthday, have a good day. Take care everyone.

Cheers Judy Brady

Bendemeer Art Show
Colours of Autumn

Bendemeer Art Show & Sale
Bendemeer Town Hall
April 30 - May 3 2026
Entry: \$15 per person | Kids: Free

BARRABA COMMUNITY NEWS

COMMUNITY OWNED AND EDITED

Published by Community College Northern Inland Inc.

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Email news@barrabacommunitynews.org.au Printed on site at the Community College. Free publication by email or collection from local Barraba main street businesses



Barraba Rugby League Football Club

Barraba Bulldogs Make History – Full Club Return This Sunday

For the first time since the early 1990's, the Club will field both a First Grade and Reserve Grade side in the same competition, alongside its Ladies League Tag team.

This historic moment signals a strong resurgence for the Bulldogs and highlights the growing strength, depth, and commitment within the Club and wider Barraba community.

Event Details

Barraba Bulldogs vs Guyra

Sunday 3 May 2026

Barraba Recreation Ground

Reserve Grade - 12:00 pm. Ladies League Tag - 1:15 pm.

First Grade - 2:30 pm.

Club President, Neville Phillips, said the occasion represents more than just football. "This is a proud moment for Barraba. To have three teams taking the field reflects the hard work behind the scenes and the passion of our players, volunteers, sponsors and supporters. It's about rebuilding something special for our town."

The Bulldogs are calling on the entire community to come out in force, wear blue and white, and get behind the teams as they take on Guyra. With a big crowd expected, a great atmosphere, and a full day of footy, it promises to be a fantastic event for families and supporters of all ages. After the final whistle, supporters are encouraged to head to the Barraba Bowling Club to continue the celebrations.

Mobility Scooter – For Sale. As New.

Details of scooter: it's lightweight, folds up for transport, it has a strong night light, warning buzzer, extra child seat, powerful three speed motor, large rear basket and front basket, also reverse gear, 25 to 40-kilometre range, six hr battery recharge. \$700.00 – Ph 0428464657



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Tamworth Regional Council Marketing Support Program Returns

Tamworth Regional Council’s Regional Events Marketing Support Program is back for another year, with applications now open for 2026-2027. The program is a platform for Council to provide both financial and/or in-kind marketing support to local events and festivals held between 1 July 2026 and 30 June 2027.

Coordinator Visitor Experiences, Linda Bridges says the program is a practical way Tamworth Regional Council can help promote events and bring more visitation to the region. “The Regional Events Marketing Support Program aims to build awareness and drive participation for locally run events in the region.” Ms Bridges says.

To qualify for funding, events must be able to report on three key focus areas: the economic benefit of the event to the Tamworth region; increasing overnight visitation to the Tamworth region; and demonstrating how the event will grow from its current state. Each event and festival applicant are assessed individually to ensure they meet the eligibility criteria. Any funding received must be used exclusively for marketing purposes.

Local event organisers can receive a range of marketing support ranging from media coverage, sharing of promotional material, and social media promotion.

Event organisers are encouraged to apply for the program that offers support from \$100 up to \$5000. Applications are now open and close Thursday 28 May 2026.

MEN AND THEIR BOYS SAFETALK WORKSHOP

1 May @ 4:30 pm - 8:30 pm



A free event

Know What to Say When It Matters Most

Join Lifeline for a free 4 hour workshop that increases suicide awareness and gives you the skills to start meaningful conversations. Sign up with your son, grandfather, uncle or mentor – helping men and boys stay safe from suicide.

safeTALK can help you:

- Become more comfortable talking about suicide
- Support those who may be experiencing times of distress
- Learn ways to connect someone to further support

Register Today!

<https://lifelinedirect.org.au/.../tra.../course/20/TN-ST-1-C>

*This training is for people 16 years and over in the New England North West. Refreshments & snacks will be provided.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH – LACK OF TELSTRA SERVICE AFFECTING RESIDENTS

A message from the Mayor of Gwydir Shire - Published on 13 April 2026



It is deeply disappointing that in this day and age we are still having to raise serious concerns about the lack of reliable mobile service across our Shire. This is not a new issue - I have raised it time and time again, yet little has changed.

Over the Easter weekend, Bingara hosted its annual Easterfish Competition. Volunteers dedicated countless hours to make it a success, only for the experience to be dampened by poor mobile coverage. The same issue occurred last month in Gravesend during the Mason Daley Cod Classic weekend. Each time we raise these concerns, we are told by Telstra that the problem is due to congestion - too many people trying to use the network at once. Quite frankly, that explanation is no longer acceptable. My greatest concern is the potential for a serious emergency where communication failure could lead to tragic consequences. That risk is simply too great to ignore.

Let me be clear: this is not a Local Government or State Government responsibility - yet we are the ones continuing to push for solutions. We have made every effort to work constructively with Telstra rather than simply complain, but progress has been extremely limited. We were promised that the tower in southern Bingara would be upgraded before the end of 2025. That commitment has not been met. While it is encouraging to see that upgrades are underway in Warialda this week, much more needs to be done across the entire Shire.

Please know that I hear your concerns and share your frustration. I remain committed to advocating on behalf of our community. As a next step, I will be formally requesting a meeting with the Federal Minister for Communications the Hon Anika Wells, alongside General Manager Leeah Daley, to demand meaningful and urgent action. I have also raised

these concerns at a Country Mayors' Meeting at Parliament House in Sydney, as well as with the Shadow Minister.

Enough is enough - our communities deserve better.
Cr Tiffany Galvin, Mayor



Australians urged to “Have the Jab Chat” with their GP to help cut through vaccine misinformation.

The AMA has launched a national social media campaign encouraging Australians to speak with their doctor about vaccination, with widespread misinformation creating uncertainty, and fuelling declining immunisation rates.

Launched ahead of World Immunisation Week, the ‘Have the jab chat’ campaign responds to growing confusion about where Australians are getting their health information — and how that information is influencing decisions about vaccination. “When it comes to vaccination, Australians deserve advice that is qualified, personalised and confidential — they deserve a doctor,” Dr McMullen said.

Australia’s vaccination rates have declined since the COVID 19 pandemic, with coverage for key childhood vaccines now falling below the 95 per cent level needed for strong community protection. The trends outlined in the AMA’s immunisation report highlight sustained declines in vaccination coverage across age groups.

“Misinformation spreads faster than facts online, and increasingly sophisticated content — including deepfakes — can make unreliable information sound credible,” Dr McMullen said. “That creates real confusion for people who are genuinely trying to make the right decision about their health.” Dr McMullen said that while governments had expanded vaccine delivery to more healthcare professionals, access was not the core issue, and this approach had not increased uptake. “These retail pathways are largely reaching Australians who are already willing to be vaccinated, while the real decline is coming from people delaying or deferring due to uncertainty and information overload.”

Dr McMullen said many Australians were not rejecting vaccines but were delaying or questioning vaccination as they try to make sense of conflicting information from different sources. “We know many Australians are turning to AI tools and online searches for health advice,” she said. “But those tools can’t look at your medical history, understand your personal risks, or give you the context you deserve — and they’re not always accurate or validated. AI can give you an answer, but it can’t give you your answer. This campaign

is designed to encourage and support Australians, who feel unsure or overwhelmed, to access advice they can trust. Australians deserve advice that is trustworthy, tailored to them and delivered in a confidential setting — and that’s exactly what a conversation with a doctor provides. Doctors bring more than a decade of medical training, an understanding of a patient’s health history, and the clinical judgement needed to assess individual risk and vaccine eligibility — particularly for people with underlying conditions or higher risk factors. A conversation with your doctor can also create opportunities for ‘while you’re here’ moments — supporting prevention, chronic disease management, mental health, or medication reviews. In many cases, one conversation can lead to earlier intervention and lifelong health benefits.”

Think pharmacy first for life saving vaccines this World Immunisation Week

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia is urging Australians to protect themselves and their families by visiting their local community pharmacy for vaccination.

National Vice President Simon Blacker said pharmacies offered convenient, accessible, walk-in options so Australian’s can get protected wherever and whenever they need. “We know vaccinations save lives. They reduce the chance of you getting really sick and they reduce the chance of you making your loved ones seriously ill. More people are coming to community pharmacy for their vaccinations, last year 1 in 4 vaccinations were administered in community pharmacy. It’s quick, convenient and you can often walk in and get it done straight away.”

Vaccinations given at a community pharmacy are updated in patient records and those that are eligible can also receive their vaccination for free under the National Immunisation Program Vaccinations in Pharmacy (NIPVIP) program. “World Immunisation Week is the perfect time for patients to pop into their pharmacy and ask about vaccinations. Pharmacists can check vaccination records, provide advice and administer a range of vaccines, including flu, measles, shingles and RSV.”

Australians living with long term illnesses, including heart disease, lung disease, diabetes and immune conditions, are at higher risk of severe illness and complications from vaccine preventable diseases and are strongly encouraged to check their vaccination status. Community pharmacies are Australia’s most accessible frontline healthcare destination, with more than 6,000 locations nationwide. Most pharmacies offer walk in appointments for vaccinations, meaning people can get protected close to home, without long waits or the need to book weeks in advance.



Helping life support customers plan ahead for power interruptions

A practical planning resource supporting people during power outages who rely on medical equipment across Australia



Online resources now available to help people plan ahead for power outages

According to Essential Energy’s Customer Resolutions Manager, Elaine Gillman, the Life Support Power Outage Plan, part of a national collaboration led by The Energy Charter, is a practical planning resource for people who rely on medical equipment at home and those who care for them.

The plan provides free and accessible tools, including a simple checklist and a downloadable plan that people can tailor to their own circumstances and share with carers, family members and health professionals.

For households that rely on medical equipment at home, planning ahead for a power interruption is an important part of managing care needs. While electricity networks are designed to be reliable, outages - whether planned or unplanned - can occur, and increasingly more severe and unpredictable weather can also impact the network and, in some cases, lead to longer restoration times.

“The Life Support Power Outage Plan gives households a clear way to plan ahead, make shared decisions and feel more confident about their arrangements”. Elaine says. “We’re working to make sure customers know the plan is available and understand how it can support them. Sharing these resources through our customer communications helps ensure people feel informed and supported,” Elaine says.

Customers who rely on medical equipment at home, along with their carers and support people, can access the Life Support Power Outage Plan online at lifesupport.poweroutageplan.com.au Customers are also encouraged to ensure they are registered as a Life Support customer with their electricity retailer, so their life support needs are known during planned and unplanned power interruptions. For more information, please visit our website essentialenergy.com.au/at-home/life-support.