



BARRABA COMMUNITY NEWS

COMMUNITY OWNED AND EDITED

FREE LOCAL NEWSPAPER

Wednesday 13th May 2026



BARRABA RSL & RECREATIONAL CLUB LTD

Phone 67821379

For the information of members and guests.

THIS WEEK

THURSDAY 14th MAY

BINGO

First game starts at 6pm

FRIDAY 15th May

MEAT RAFFLES

Tickets on sale from 5.30pm

Membership Draw \$2000

SUNDAY 17th May

ANGLER CLUB RAFFLES

Membership Draw \$1400

SATURDAY 16th May

Bistro closed at lunch due to private function

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

GARAGE SALE
SATURDAY 16th MAY
9AM - 3PM
32 MAUDE STREET, BARRABA
 HOUSEHOLD ITEMS
 BRIC & BRAC
 ASSORTED TIMBER
 NO EARLY BIRDS
 CASH ONLY
 COME HAVE A BROWSE!
 THANK YOU!

Warm & Woolly Exhibition
Barraba Claypan & Fuller Gallery
Friday 5th - Monday 8th June
10am - 3pm Daily
YESTERYEAR display

Join us on Saturday 6th or Sunday 7th for Devonshire Tea from 10am or warm and hearty home-made soups for lunch from 12md.



Hi my name is Annabel Kanno, I am 11 years old and I live in Barraba.

In February I completed a swimming challenge to raise money for Starlight Foundation by swimming 32km

This May I have decided to take on the Super Steps challenge by doing 10000 steps a day(that's about 7km), to raise money for The Starlight Foundation.

Did you know about 44000 kids will be admitted to hospital in May? It can be pretty scary. Through play, creativity and social connection, Starlight creates the fun and happiness seriously ill children and their parents need to help them get through their tough times.

Please sponsor me and support my efforts to give back and change lives,
Thank you,
Annabel

<https://www.superstep.org.au/s/17102/17916>



Barraba United Hospital Auxiliary Happenings



The Barraba Hospital Auxiliary held a very successful street stall last week. The table was laden with books, jams, pickles, plants, handicrafts, home cooked cakes and biscuits. **Thank you to everyone who donated items for sale, your generosity was very much appreciated.**

Marnie Crowley drew the raffle, with the winner being Brian Molloy, second and third to Alice Thorne. Thank you to everyone who supported our stall and to our volunteers who helped on the cold morning.

Thank you to the people who also helped with our fundraising by selling tickets and donating prizes, to raise funds for the Barraba Hospital Auxiliary.

Letters to the Editor

Last week the Barraba Community New team celebrated 6 years 'in print'. We received a couple of letters from our readers.

Congratulations it is a lovely read each week
Gail Goldman

Congratulations on 6 years of service to the community even though I don't live in Barraba, but with my 5 years as a TRC Councillor I made many friends in Barraba, It is great to keep up with the 'News' of your community who supported me in my time on TRC.
Cheers Jim Maxwell.





1964 BARRABA FLOODS – a letter from Wendy Kilroy

Wendy’s letter was copied onto the Barraba Historical Museum’s Facebook page. The letter prompted many replies - here is a selection:

Garry Smith

We were luckier than most, our house was at 8 Queen Street, straight opposite the railway gates, and like most, packed everything up as much as possible, and the water came right up to the back door, and only just dribbled into our house; all the best to all.

Jan Smith

I remember Mum collecting baskets of muddy sheets, towels and clothing to wash for Auntie Mit and your family, [Wendy](#). Our house had washing hanging everywhere inside and out!

Mary Williams

I was in that flood Staying with my Grandparents at the time I had gone up town for a few things when I was cut off by the rising river. My Grandparents lived in 13 Cambridge Street via Cooper Street Joe and Eve Carter I rang gran and told what had happened and was told to get home. A young man piggybacked me through the water so I could make it home. I remember the snakes swimming in the water as we made our way. I can not remember his name at this moment but I believe he was killed driving a school bus years later It is a memory that has lived in my mind all this time My wonderful years holidaying in Barraba. How I use to look forward to when it was time to go to Gran and Pops.

Sharon Forwood

My grandparents lived in Cherry Lane and were good friends with your family, they lost just about everything in that flood, I remember Dad saying the water was just at the fence line in our house in Rodney St.

Jill Bridgen

I remember this flood quite well and helping clean up a couple of houses. I think, they were across the river opposite Cherry Street. I was absolutely shocked at the amount of silt inside the houses. Floods are so devastating and I always feel so sorry for anyone who is affected by them.

Ben Taylor

Remember it well it was right out over the flat where the football field is we sat on top of the hill just before you drop onto the flat and watched the water was in all those houses there.

Michael Hayes

My grandparents had a fruit orchard on Cherry St. Water was up nearly to the roof. I was only little but remember the cleanup of the mud.

Di Holcombe

What a great story Wendy, I remember it well, our family was isolated by Ironbark Creek and when able, Dad drove the Austin truck into town with us and cousins on the back, what an adventure, love to you Wendy, Di Holcombe (Stobie).

Myra Perry

Gosh I remember this my Nan lived up the top of Henry street we walked up to see if she was ok the flood waters stopped halfway up the hill and when we came home much later through Queen Street we were picking up gold fish out of the gutters. They were still alive flapping around. It was a big adventure for us of course we didn’t realise the loss a lot of people suffered.

George Taylor

The one blessing this flood came in day time and not at night or there would have definitely been loss of lives. The rise of the river was so fast.

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 Senior Citz. Mother’s Day Raffle Results

1st Prize Kelly and Jeff Mortor
2nd Prize Judy Conway
3rd Prize Ross Roberts
Many thanks to all who participated

Empire Theatre 100 Queen St. Barraba

Built circa 1920's. Former picture theatre which closed down in the late '60s. Run by Cyril Leard and then taken over by Maurie Hagan and Bobby Clifton. After them, it was run by Warwick Wilson and was then taken over by the Garskes who used the building as the printing works for the local newspaper.



A single storey building with a large hipped roof and ventilated gambles to the top with an ornate gable-shaped parapet to the front having strongly articulated pilasters, raking caps and art nouveau inspired render detail. The ground floor consists of a central entry way with metal gates and glazed shop fronts (now painted over) are set between strongly articulated brick pilasters at the front. A suspended metal awning covers the footpath. To the left hand side is a public entry to the fire escape located between the two buildings and this is under an archway that matches the window lintels.

Memories of the Picture Theatre

My memories of the Barraba Picture Theatre before Maurie Hagan and Bobby Clifton owned it was of a man and wife with the surname Leard. Mr Leard was in charge of the street lights before they became automated. There was a building in Clifton Lane and that's where the lights were turned on and off. He also ran the picture theatre Saturday afternoon matinee and cartoons. Maurie Hagan ran the theatre Friday and Saturday nights, news, cartoons and I think two movies (same both nights). Tuesday nights were a new movie.

There was a staircase near the ticket office to go upstairs to what we called the 'posh seating'. Under that there were single upright seats and down the front (I think) was called 'the stalls'. These consisted of canvas deck seats which could seat four people. There was a lot of seat jumping and things being thrown about and that's when the torch light would come down the aisle and you would hear someone saying: "Here comes Creeping ?? coming, look out!" Summertime was outdoor movies behind the theatre. The

entrance lane is still there beside the building. All in all, it was fun and good times, even with that damn torch! This was while most of us were young and still in school.

Cost us 9 pence – 6 pence to get in and 3 pence for an ice cream.

Shirley Simmons

The Empire Theatre played an important role in my life as I was growing up. Every Saturday my family and I went to the 'pictures' for the night session. It didn't matter what was showing, we went anyway, it was our weekly outing. Before the Theatre opened for business, my Dad would park in the street and the "Sally" band would play and collect donations. Dad always donated as he had a great respect for the "Sallies".

The Theatre had three areas with different prices. The 'upstairs' (dearest), 'downstairs' back (cheaper) and peanut alley (canvas seats and cheapest).

Occasionally the Projector would break down amid whistles and catcalls until it was working again.

Over the years the Theatre has been used as a Roller-Skating Rink, (a skill I could never master) and a Newspaper Printery.

Marjorie Urquhart

Up the front were canvas seats where all the kids sat. There were ordinary seats behind the canvas ones and ordinary seats upstairs.

The Salvation Army played outside the Theatre at half-time. At half-time we all went over the road to the Sofis's Café.

Lesley Grigg



ALL ABOARD!! COACH SERVICE BOOST FOR REGION

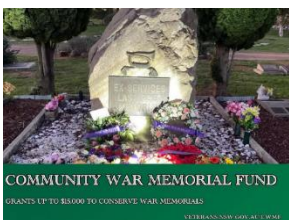
The wheels are turning for additional coach services for the region as more passengers look to connect to Dubbo and Muswellbrook.

Member for Tamworth Kevin Anderson said an additional service from Tamworth to Dubbo via Gunnedah and a new service to Muswellbrook was welcome news for those who prefer for someone else to take the wheel. “I’ve fought hard for more coach services for our community, because I recognise that people need transport options, particularly those who want to be able to sit back, relax and enjoy their journey on a coach rather than having to drive,” Mr Anderson said. “I campaigned for the Tamworth to Dubbo route to be introduced in 2018 because it gives locals an opportunity to visit friends and family in the Central West. The route also stops at Somerton, Carroll, Gunnedah, Coonabarabran and Gilgandra, giving people an option to visit those areas as well. Now the route has proven so popular that an additional Wednesday service will be introduced alongside the existing Monday and Friday services. I know locals will welcome the additional route because it will give them greater flexibility when planning a trip to see their friends and family.”

“There will also be a new route operating Monday to Friday between Tamworth and Muswellbrook and return, providing a new day-return link to and from Newcastle via rail interchange at Muswellbrook. That’s a big boost for our connection to the Hunter. This is a really good opportunity to jump on the coach, enjoy our countryside, and see what the regions have to offer. With the cost of living so high, this gives people an option to get away and enjoy a comfortable coach ride while protecting their hip pocket.”

GRANT APPLICATIONS OPEN

Community war memorial fund



Do you know a local war memorial that needs some repairs? The Community War Memorial Fund is now open for applications.

ANZAC Day was a strong reminder of the importance of our memorials.

Grants of up to \$15,000 are available to councils and eligible community organisations. Open now until the 25th of June. More information:

<https://www.veterans.nsw.gov.au/heritage/community-war-memorials-fund/>



Apply for an Active and Creative Kids voucher.

Vouchers to help families with eligible school-aged children pay for sport, recreational, creative or cultural activities.

To be eligible for the voucher, you must have received Family Tax Benefit Part A, Part B or both in the current or previous financial year. Check your eligibility before applying for the voucher. Eligibility requirements for Family Tax Benefit are available on the Services Australia website.

Parents, guardians and carers receiving Family Tax Benefit can apply for an Active and Creative Kids voucher for each eligible child.

The \$50 voucher is available twice a year to use towards sport, creative and cultural activities.

Voucher 2 – 2025: Available now

Apply for and use the voucher by 14 July 2026

Voucher 1 – 2026: Available now

Apply for and use the voucher by 31 December 2026



Active Regional Communities Package Local Priorities

The NSW Government has established the ARC - Local Priorities

Stream 3 with funding of up to \$10 million to expand the activities of community organisations that contribute to the wellbeing, social or economic participation of residents.

Key information

Grant amount: From \$10,000 to \$100,000

Application opened: 13 April 2026

Application closes: 22 May 2026, 4:00 pm

Program objective

Expand the activities of community organisations that contribute to the wellbeing, social or economic participation of residents.

The full Program Guidelines are available on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder or you can follow this link (Program Guidelines) to view the guidelines.

This program is administered by Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.



Regional Event Fund - Event Development stream

This fund supports mature events that have already received maximum Flagship Event funding and can present a comprehensive strategy for future growth as drivers of tourism.

Key information

Grant amount: Up to \$50,000

Application opened: 18 March 2026

Application closes: 31 December 2026, 11:59 pm

Program objective

The Regional Event Fund identifies and supports events in regional NSW that have the potential to act as a 'cornerstone' or flagship tourism event for their area by attracting overnight visitation and delivering long term benefits to the region.

The Regional Event Fund comprises 3 individual funding streams providing a development pipeline for events from inception, through emergence, to their establishment as tourism events in Regional NSW.

This page provides information on the Event Development stream. Guidelines for the Incubator Event stream and the Flagship Event stream are available separately.

The Event Development stream supports events that have previously received the maximum funding permitted through the Flagship Event stream and can present a comprehensive strategy for future growth that includes the continued development of its tourism potential to drive overnight visitation to the event.

The Event Development stream will offer one-off grants of up to \$50,000 (ex GST) to events in Regional NSW to support key strategic growth initiatives that will have a direct impact on increasing overnight visitation to the event. A clear strategic rationale will be required for all initiatives together with a justification for the amount requested.

This program is funded and administered by Destination NSW.



NSW Rural Fire Service

The 30th April marked the end of the Bush Fire Danger Period for all Local Government Areas (LGAs) across NSW, with

Gwydir, Mid-Western, Moree Plains and Narrabri ending their fire restrictions today.

While landholders no longer require a fire permit, you are still required to notify the [#RFS](#) and your neighbours at least 24 hours before lighting a fire. To notify the RFS, please complete the online form available on our website: www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/notify

Please note that in some areas, you may still need an environmental permit from your local council or permit from Fire and Rescue NSW. You must also be aware of restrictions on the size and materials permitted in burn piles. For more information on safe pile burning, visit the [#RFS](#) website: www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/safeburning

A message from the Gwydir Mayor

You are warmly invited to join the Gwydir community for the official opening of the Bingara Administration Building on 15 May 2026, commencing at 11:00am.

Come along and celebrate this significant milestone as we unveil the new facility and mark the occasion with a special ribbon-cutting ceremony.

This project has been a major undertaking, and one we are incredibly proud of. Great care has been taken to preserve the building's beautiful façade - honouring its history while embracing the future. It is a moment of great excitement for our entire community, and we would be delighted to have you share it with us.

We are especially pleased that our Bingara staff are now brought together under one roof after many years across multiple locations. The new building will house administration staff serving the southern part of the Shire, while our Warialda Administration Building will continue to provide the same high level of service to ratepayers and residents in the northern part of the Shire.

Hope to see you there.

Cr Tiffany Galvin, Mayor

Living the Gwydir Good Life

From Better House and Garden

Why do magpies sing to humans? The surprising science behind their songs

Story by Livia Gamble

Australian magpies (*Gymnorhina tibicen*) are among the most recognisable birds in Australia, thanks to their striking black-and-white feathers, intelligence, and perhaps most famously, their beautiful songs. Their unique behaviour and vocal traits have even led to people making friends with magpies.

If a magpie has ever serenaded you in your backyard, you might have wondered: Why do magpies sing to humans? And what does a magpie's sound actually mean?

The sounds of the Australian magpie

Magpies rank among the most vocally advanced songbirds in the world, producing an incredible range of complex and varied sounds.

What does a magpie sound like?

The Magpies' iconic sounds have been categorised into a few groups.

Carolling: In her book *Australian Magpie: Biology and Behaviour of an Unusual Songbird*, Dr Gisela Kaplan describes carolling as "loud, noisy and powerful."

Warbling: In contrast, warbling is much softer.

Alarm calls: These sounds are harsh, staccato squawks to warn off predators.

Mimicry: Magpies are excellent mimics. Some magpies imitate the calls of other birds or even human-made sounds, such as alarms or ringtones.

Why do magpies sing?

There are several reasons magpies sing.

As Dr Kaplan notes, "Vocalisations can inform about food, can express anxiety or alarm, rivalry, attention, defence, flying away (follow me) and similar short instructions."

Additionally, magpies will send out a melodious call, warning other birds to defend their space and letting them know that the territory is taken. Maggies also sing to each other to strengthen their social bonds. If you hear magpies carolling together, this signals a victory for the birds who have most likely just successfully defended their territory.

"When adults come together to carol, we call it a duet when there is a pair of magpies and a chorus if there are more than two," writes Dr Kaplan. "However, the purpose of the carol is the same: a declaration of victory and/or a reaffirmation of the bonding of the pair or the group."

But what about magpies singing to humans?



Why do magpies sing to humans?

Many Australians report magpies singing while perched nearby or following them. This behaviour isn't random; it's a sign of recognition and possibly even affection.

1. Magpies recognise human faces

Magpies are one of the few wild bird species that can recognise and remember individual human faces. Dr Gisela says magpies "can remember humans for years" and can assess individual risk, choosing to either swoop or serenade based on past interactions.

2. A greeting or a bonding song?

In places where magpies are treated well, some birds appear to sing around certain people. This may be their version of a greeting, part recognition, part trust, and perhaps even a way of bonding.

3. Curiosity and communication

Magpies are naturally curious and incredibly intelligent. They may be vocalising to express interest or comfort. In this context, singing can be compared to a dog wagging its tail or a cat purring.

Are magpies friendly to humans?

Yes – and no. Australian magpies are infamous for swooping during breeding season, but outside of that period, they can be very friendly and social.

How do you know if a magpie likes you?

Magpies don't beat around the bush, so if one doesn't like you, you will know about it. On the other hand, if a magpie is singing near you, making eye contact or following you around on regular walking routes, it's safe to say you've got a friend in that magpie.

Some magpies have been known to visit the same people daily, responding to names and even bringing gifts (like pebbles or leaves).

Why are magpies aggressive sometimes?

Not all magpies are swoopers. However, during the spring breeding season (August to October), males may swoop in to protect their nests.

This aggression:

- usually lasts 4–6 weeks
- is generally aimed at specific individuals who are perceived as threats
- can often be avoided by forming a relationship early in the season.

Many locals swear by the trick of saying “hello” and waving to their neighbourhood magpie regularly; it might just keep the peace.



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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 17th 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

 **WARDS PLUMBING**

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(02) 6782 1107



ATTENTION: YOUNG PEOPLE IN BARRABA

Do you know a young person living in one of the region's towns, villages and surrounding areas who is interested in representing their community?

Expressions of Interest (EOI) will soon be opening to younger residents who would like to represent their community by joining one of our Precinct Committees. The committees aim to strengthen Council's connection with the smaller communities in our region. They will provide another platform for young people to advocate for their peers across the region, without needing to travel to Tamworth. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for more information.



Volunteers are at the heart of our community, contributing their time, skills and passion to support events, services and organisations that benefit everyone and now is the chance to recognise them!

National Volunteer Week runs from 18 - 24 May and to celebrate, we are holding an exciting event the whole family can enjoy! Join us in Bicentennial Park on Saturday 23 May for a sausage sizzle, entertainment, fun activities and displays and the chance to recognise our incredible local volunteers!

BINGARA OPEN TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS

When: 6th-8th June 2026
Entries close: Friday 29th May

For the program of events, entry fees, tournament conditions and accommodation options please follow the link below.

Whether it's 'going for gold' or a 'hit and giggle'...bring your family and friends along...and have a 'bash'!

For online tennis entries and dinner tickets payments:
www.92computing.com.au/bushbashentry.htm

CELEBRATING 90 YEARS!

Anniversary Dinner

Join us to celebrate 90 years of old friends, amazing memories...and some great tennis along the way!

When: Saturday 6th June 2026
Where: Roxy Theatre, Bingara
Time: 7pm for 7.30pm start
Tickets: \$60 per head (BYO)
RSVP: Wednesday 3rd June

BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL!



Become a Field Officer

Census

- ✓ Deliver Census letters and forms
- ✓ Earn extra money close to home
- ✓ No experience necessary

Apply now
census.abs.gov.au/jobs



The Australian National Census will be happening again in August 2026, and the Australian Bureau of Statistics is looking for field officers across Australia.

As a Field Officer, you'll be the local face of the Census. You'll deliver Census letters and forms, answer questions from the public and follow up households that haven't yet responded. Field Officer jobs are temporary and suit a variety of schedules, from students to part-time workers and retirees. You can earn extra money and work flexibly across weekdays, weekends and evenings. Join the Census team and help collect the data that informs local services for your community. To apply and see all Census job opportunities, visit census.abs.gov.au/jobs.

INVASIVE WEEDS



Beyond a friendly wave when bringing the bins in, being a good neighbour means keeping an eye out for nasties you don't want around... specifically invasive pest animals and weeds on your property. Pests and weeds impact around 70% of NSW threatened species and endangered ecological communities, and the responsibility sits with all of us. Everyone in NSW has a legislated general biosecurity duty. Have pests or weeds at your place? You have a duty to take action. Find out how - trcnews.au/Weeds

Rugby Union Recap – 09.05.2026

On Saturday the Barraba Rams headed to Armidale for the 3rd round of the NERU competition where they went up against the Armidale Blues.

Our Women's side after having already 2 wins under their belt for the season kicked off the day feeling very confident. With a gap spotted early on from 5/8 Ally Smith throwing Lelani Tevaga a neat cut out ball to put her over for the first try. A strong Blues side made our girls work hard in attack and even harder in defence where they came back getting 2 tries on us from strong runs up the centre. Lelani making another break offloading to Ally to run on putting another try on the board for the girls. Jordyn Snape was next to push over the line with great work from our forwards helping to push her across, Addison Dixon successfully converting gave us a lead of 17-10. The Blues didn't back down and with strong carries pushed across the line on the bell, but with an unsuccessful conversion the Rams took the win 17-15. There was lots to be taken out of this game for the girls and plenty to be worked on at training before their next hit out on the 23rd May.

The Men's side then took to the field with a positive attitude for the day after 2 losses for the year already. The very young Rams side showed great skill in attack utilising the speed and strength from young Jarrod Petrus in the centre, with Brendan Newell and Tom Croll moving the ball around the field nicely. Strong defence as always from the forwards in particular young James Brand. Whilst the very knowledgeable Blues side gained a quick few tries on our boys they always came back strong and held their heads high. Cooper Chapman was first to cross the line for our boys with an outstanding run, unfortunately getting his hand trodden on after scoring he was sidelined due to injury. Brandon Newell's quick step and speed saw him cross the line for the second try of the day for the Rams, Both tries were converted successfully by Tom Croll. Unfortunately, just not enough to get a win going down 48-14. Credit to the Rams as a very young side entering a tough first grade competition. Hang in their boys, a win is coming your way!

This week's Points went to:

WOMENS

3 – Jordyn Snape 2 – Lelani Tevaga
1 – Jemma Johnson & Amie Middlemiss
PP – Jordyn Snape, Kiah Newell, Amie Middlemiss

MENS

3 – Jarrod Petrus 2 – Brandon Newell
1 – James Brand PP – James Brand

A bye round this weekend for both teams before our women's take on Dorrigo on the 23rd of May. Game Location TBA



BARRABA - Heated Pool

Opening hours:

Monday	1 PM – 5 PM
Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	1 PM – 5 PM
Thursday	1 PM – 5 PM
Friday	10 AM – 2 PM
Saturday	Closed
Sunday	Closed

Thanks to Miro for sending the 'quick pic' of the heated pool opening hours.

EMERGENCY SERVICES CONTACT LIST

Ambulance	000
Fire	000
Police	67900360
VRA	000
Barraba Police Station	(02) 6790 0360
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



John Hawkins, Head, Canberra School of Government, University of Canberra

After two decades of declining cash use, Australians are handing over more banknotes and coins for regular purchases again, a new survey by the Reserve Bank has found. The decline in the use of physical money had accelerated during the COVID pandemic, but bottomed out between 2022 and 2025.

Around 15% of payments in 2025 were made using cash. Cash is more likely to be used for small transactions, with a quarter of transactions below \$10 paid in cash. Cash therefore accounts for a smaller proportion (8%) of the total value of payments we made than of the number of payments.

One decision that may stabilise the use of cash is that since January 2026 the federal government has mandated that most grocery stores and petrol stations must continue to accept cash.

Who are the main users of cash?

About half of Australians use cash in a typical week, the survey found. Around 7% of the population use it for more than 80% of their transactions. These high cash users tend to be older, poorer and more likely to live in regional areas than the average Australian. Cash use is notably higher in remote areas, including in some First Nations communities where digital services are less reliable.

People making illegal transactions are also likely to be higher cash users, but this may be understated in the Reserve Bank's survey. There are \$50 billion of \$100 notes in circulation – almost 20 for every Australian. Given most people rarely see one, the suspicion is they are used and hoarded by criminals.

Among the biggest declines in cash use were for dining out and takeaway food, and transport, reflecting the increased use of card payments and digital payment methods.

Why do people prefer cash?

A third of Australians highly value being able to pay with cash. They say they would face a major inconvenience or hardship if they could not use it.

The most common reasons were they transact with sellers who only accept cash; find it simplifies budgeting; prefer it for giving money to family and friends; or have security or privacy concerns.

Another reason why consumers may prefer to use cash is to avoid surcharges imposed by many merchants for using alternatives. From October 2026, these surcharges will be banned.

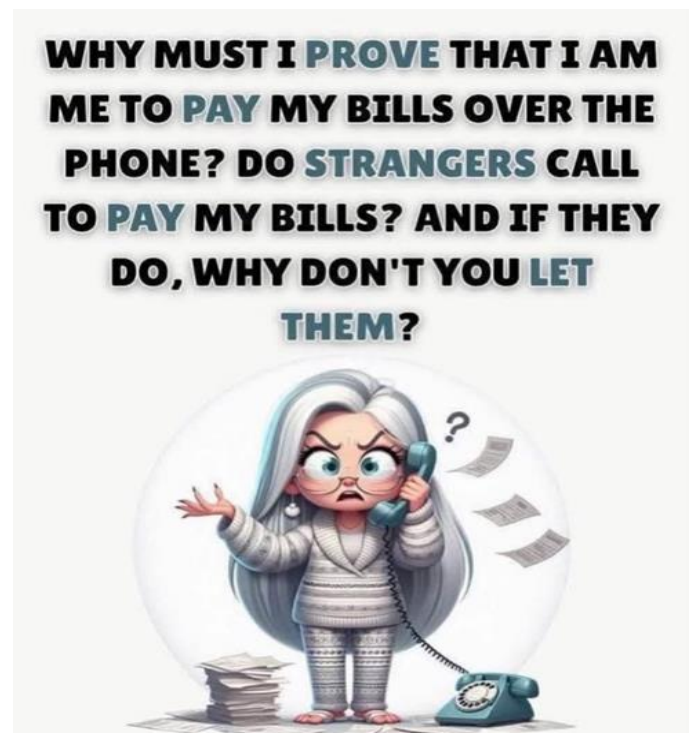
Even people who rarely make payments with cash often like to keep some in their wallet. Three-quarters of Australians hold some cash in their wallets. The median amount held is \$65. The most common reason stated is concern about the reliability of electronic payment methods. The Red Cross has suggested families keep some cash, as payment systems may not operate in an emergency.

While there is still substantial demand for cash, it is becoming harder to access. There are fewer bank branches. The number of automated teller machines, particularly those owned by banks, has fallen from a peak of more than 30,000 to under 25,000, the Reserve Bank said.

What are the alternatives?

A previous survey for the Reserve Bank conducted in 2022 showed about half of all payments were made using debit cards and a quarter using credit cards. BPAY and Paypal each accounted for 2% of payments.

Data from the Bank for International Settlements show that cash in circulation in Australia is equivalent to about 4% of annual gross domestic product – about the same as in Canada and the United Kingdom. By contrast, it is less than 1% in Sweden but around 20% in Hong Kong and Japan. Other countries have also experienced the decline in the use of cash flattening out recently.





Ageing Australia welcomes delayed hospital discharge enquiries

Ageing Australia welcomes the establishment of joint enquiries into older people facing delayed discharge from hospitals by state and Federal Governments. A new national hospital discharge joint taskforce will look at ways to improve outcomes for older patients, while a separate enquiry by the NSW Productivity Commission will recommend ways of reducing discharge delays, improving access to care and relieving pressure on hospitals.

“Too often, older people are being left to languish in hospital far longer than necessary. But the solutions to this problem are constantly oversimplified, which makes real progress impossible,” Ageing Australia CEO Tom Symondson said. “Hospitals are excellent at providing critical emergency care when a person has a fall at home or suffers from a stroke. But they are not a good place for older people to be long term. We see many people who entered hospital relatively healthy rapidly lose their ability to live independently because of the impacts of being left in bed, loneliness and constant noise and disruption. Every day they are in hospital exponentially increases the risk they will never be able to return home.”

“On top of this, many older patients cannot be cared for in residential care because their clinical needs are far beyond what we can deliver – a day in hospital is funded ten times more than a day in residential care. Add to this the chronic shortage of residential beds across the nation and the enormous waiting list for homecare packages, and even those with relatively low needs find themselves stuck. With a rapidly ageing population, making sure older people have the right care in the right setting must become a priority for all governments. Only by states, the Commonwealth, hospitals and aged care providers working together can we find solutions. We welcome the joint enquiries which we hope will shine a much needed light on this wicked problem and are ready to assist in any way we can,” Mr Symondson said.

MUM'S EASY BANANA MUFFINS

These Easy Banana Muffins are just like mum used to make! They are soft and moist and the perfect option for over-ripe bananas. Add cinnamon or top with cinnamon sugar for a fun twist.

INGREDIENTS BASIC BANANA MUFFIN

- 2-3 overripe bananas
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon (optional)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup milk

ADDITIONS:

- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon (optional)
- ½ cup mini chocolate chips (optional)
- ½ cup finely chopped nuts (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 450 degrees.

Line a muffin tin with 12 paper liners.

Lightly grease paper liners with non-stick cooking spray.

In a large mixing bowl, use a hand mixer to cream together bananas, butter, and sugar, about two minutes.

Beat in eggs until combined.

Add in the baking powder, salt, cinnamon (if using), and vanilla and mix briefly.

Add in half of flour, mix with hand mixer until just combined, then add in the milk, stirring to combine.

Scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl and add in the remaining flour until just combined.

Fold in chocolate chips or nuts if desired.

Bake for 5 mins at 450degs, then reduce the oven to 350 and bake for further 15 mins