



BARRABA COMMUNITY NEWS

COMMUNITY OWNED AND EDITED

FREE LOCAL NEWSPAPER

Wednesday 10th June 2026



To everyone who has been patient while we settled in, got organised, and worked

through Andrew's long goodbye—thank you for your understanding and support.

I finally feel that we are in a position to start planning for the future in a more focused and practical way. Our personal lives needed time to adjust, and while we trialed a café concept, unfortunately the cook was not the right fit for our team or our community, so I made the difficult decision to close that chapter.

I am excited to share some of the ideas and opportunities we have planned for The Playhouse. While there are no firm timelines or opening dates just yet, our vision is to create a welcoming place where people can connect, relax, and enjoy a variety of experiences.

We would love to open our doors as a sit-down stay-and-play café, meeting place, conference and retreat venue, and host themed movie nights, trivia evenings, karaoke events, and much more.

The Playhouse is also available for private functions, including baby showers, weddings, birthday parties, and special celebrations. We can assist with decorations, or you are welcome to bring your own. Catering options can be tailored to suit your budget and requirements.

Our accommodation offers a peaceful and relaxing environment, with self-contained rooms available for both short and long-term stays.

Most importantly, we would love to hear your ideas and suggestions. Please feel free to call in, have a cuppa, and share your thoughts with us.

We look forward to welcoming you.

Warm regards,
Rachel & Tim



BARRABA RSL & RECREATIONAL CLUB LTD

Phone 67821379

For the information of members and guests.

THIS WEEK

**THURSDAY 11th JUNE
BINGO**

First game starts at 6pm

**FRIDAY 12th JUNE
MEAT RAFFLES**

Tickets on sale from 5.30pm
Membership Draw \$1000

**SUNDAY 14th JUNE
ANGLER CLUB RAFFLES**
Membership Draw \$1000

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



DRUG AND ALCOHOL DETOXIFICATION UNIT NEEDED.

The push for the Banksia Mental Health Unit in Tamworth to be repurposed as a drug and alcohol detoxification unit has been raised in the NSW Parliament.

Member for Tamworth Kevin Anderson put the government on notice, calling for the government to partner with a service organisation to deliver drug and alcohol detoxification services out of the unit when it becomes vacant.

“Tamworth, Gunnedah and the entire Northwest are deeply concerned about the impact of drug and alcohol addiction on our community,” Mr Anderson said. “We need access to more services and more support, which is why I have been pushing for the Banksia Mental Health Unit to be repurposed into a drug and alcohol detoxification unit when it becomes vacant this year. This is a plan that makes good sense. The unit is a purpose-built, clinical facility on hospital grounds that could easily be refurbished and repurposed as a detoxification unit. I have a strong plan to make this happen which involves a partnership between government and a non-government organisation to deliver professional clinical care on hospital grounds. The refurbishment of the facility could be funded from the \$157 million committed by the government to drug and alcohol services in regional NSW as part of the 2024 NSW Drug Summit.”

Mr Anderson put the government on notice in the NSW Parliament:

1. Recognises that drug and alcohol addiction and dependency is a significant issue for many families in the Tamworth region;
2. Acknowledges the urgent need for an inpatient detoxification unit in Tamworth;
3. Notes that the existing 25 bed Banksia Mental Health unit will soon be vacant;
4. Calls on the Government to partner with a service organisation to provide drug and alcohol detoxification services out of the vacant Banksia Mental Health Facility as soon as possible.

“This plan makes sense, and I’ll keep pushing the government to progress this opportunity,” Mr Anderson concluded.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Veterinary services in Barraba

Dear Editor,

The Barraba community is very fortunate to have a great vet! A few weeks ago, Possum, our much-loved shared cat became gravely ill.



Instead of her usual energetic self, she was lethargic and clearly uncomfortable, so off to see Rebecca the vet. At the first visit, Rebecca feared Possum had a viral feline infection that might mean the end of her little life. But we decided to try to treat her to give her a chance at another life...after all, cats are supposed to have nine lives? Rebecca discovered that Possum had a lot of fluid around her lungs, which had to be drained, but the good news was that it was a bacterial infection rather than a viral one and not contagious as we had feared. This ended up needing two hospital stays, plus multiple antibiotics (Possum says thank you to our young skilled neighbours for their diligence in persevering with this.) Rebecca was attentive to the cat’s little quirks eg, when she observed that the cat wouldn’t eat unless someone was with her, Rebecca took her laptop into where the cat was and did her work there! We also appreciated Rebecca’s explanations of the cat’s medical complications – it wasn’t all straight forward. We are now cautiously optimistic that the outcome is good and the cat seems to be back to her old self, thanks to the skill and patience and care of Rebecca!

Julie Williams



Thank you to everyone who contributed to our Street Stall last week, both with goods and purchases. The winner of the Wood

Raffle was Helen Bridges.

Barraba Potters and Craft Guild News
Successful Warm and Woolly Exhibition over the
June Long Weekend

The Barraba Potters and Craft Guild members would like thank everyone who came to visit, make a purchase or enjoyed morning tea or lunch over the long weekend. We saw visitors from Tamworth, Narrabri, Townsville, Warialda, Parkland Victoria, Illawarra, Newcastle, Bingara, St George Sydney and the Mid North Coast. The Barraba community once again came out and supported the weekend.

We kicked off on Friday morning with Yarn Bombing of the seat and the trees in front of the Gallery and the Historical Society. It has sure brightened them up for the winter! Thank you to our tree bombers who braved the weather and helped on what was a very miserable and cold morning. A top of 10 degrees!!!

Saturday and Sunday saw beautiful sunny winter days and a very busy time with sales and food service of morning tea and lunches. Saturday morning, we had lovely scones cooked by Gillian with jam and cream and on Sunday we enjoyed Debbie's famous sponge cake with jam and cream. There were a good number of visitors and Barraba residents who came in for morning tea and or soup for lunch, making it a great weekend.

A special thank you to Gerda, Jenny and Janice for showing us you're spinning and woollen embroidery skills and to everyone who loaned items for the "Yesteryear" display which added a great deal of interest to our exhibition.

Thank you to everyone who cooked, cleaned, donated, loaned, knitted, crocheted, served, sewed, supplied and sold. Without you all, events like this would not happen.

Raffle was drawn by Jacinta Gorton and the winners were:
 1st Joan McCarthy - \$70 Voucher from Barraba Beef
 2nd Andrea Jeffery - \$30 Voucher from Saunders Fruit & Vege
 3rd Jenny Simpson - Bottle of wine.

We now look forward to our **"Come and Try Day" on Saturday the 26th of September 2026**. The day will feature Pottery and Felting Classes and demonstrations on Sashiko and Machine Embroidery. Watch our facebook page and the Community News for more details. **Barraba Potters and Craft Guild Inc.** Patti Crowley, Publicity Officer



Karen and Rod Cupitt



Janice Smith and Denise Simshauser from Narrabri demonstrating how to make a woollen embroidery brooch.





The photo is of a painting of Dad, Nipper the dog, Beano the cat and the trusty Vauxhall standing outside Mac and Joan Hughes General Store.

Dad's motto, and mantra was 'service with a smile' so 'heaven-help-us' if we approached a customer with reluctance, reserve or 'the black dog'. Every customer was shown the utmost courtesy, but some, were handled with reverence. The doctor's wife was honoured with our best manners and our most gentle voice when she telephoned her weekly order through to the shop. Her choices of tinned pink salmon and asparagus spears were always on the shelf – just for her (when the rest of us thought that creamed corn was a decadent luxury.)

Another customer had to be treated with the utmost respect. He had been a Japanese prisoner-of-war and bore the legacy of his horrific survival. As a returned service-man himself, Dad showed great honour to this man and ensured that we kids were always extra polite to him. When an item that was 'made in Japan' was for sale, we had to make sure that he never saw it. Dad hated the lolly counter with dithering kids agonizing over how to maximize the spending of their precious 3 pence or 6 pence. So by the time we were 10, my sister Tina and I were relegated to this lofty role. We, ourselves, were allowed to eat 6 pence worth of lollies a day, but, we certainly consumed a life-times worth of chocolate bullets, clinkers and cobbbers. It's a wonder that neither of us ended up being obese or having diabetes.

There were always plenty of jobs for us girls to do in the shop apart from serving the customers. Eggs had to be wrapped in newspaper – 3 eggs per half sheet of newspaper then carefully placed in brown paper bags holding one dozen eggs. Butter was wrapped in white paper and women's sanitary pads were discreetly packaged, and modestly sold, from a quieter part of the shop. Processed rolls of meat, devon or garlic, were sliced with the turn of a handle on a slicing machine. Although our cats were banned from the shop, they would magically sidle up to us when they heard that handle turning. Hidden from the customer, we would slip a slice of meat down to the appreciative cat.

Before the school (Barraba Central) up the hill had its own tuck-shop, Mum made lots of lunches. Pies and sausage rolls came from the bakery but Mum made the sandwiches. Her curried egg recipe is still a family favourite. The bread had to be buttered from crust to crust, filled, generously garnished with salt and pepper, wrapped in grease proof paper, packed into a paper bag then marked with the hungry child's name. When the Masonic Lodge held their monthly meetings, Mum made trays and trays of sandwiches. Their favourite filling was camp-pie with tomato sauce mashed through it.

Being in 'The Shop' gave us a broad education and general knowledge. Prices were added up on pieces of paper or in our heads (without a calculator), change given (without a cash register's print out) and the move to decimal currency was a challenge met with a strategy. Dad's ability to handle money was admired and gave us a love for the intricacies of mathematics.



**Here is an overview of outcomes from
Tamworth Regional Council Ordinary Meeting of
Tamworth Regional Council on Tuesday 2 June
2026.**

- Councillors tonight adopted Draft Amendment No. 19 of the Tamworth Regional Development Control Plan 2010 (TRDCP) - Site Specific Controls for Stratheden Estate. The TRDCP provides “how to” guidance for anyone proposing to undertake development in the Tamworth Region. This amendment was to introduce a new chapter for the Stratheden residential housing estate, located on Manilla Road and Browns Lane, Oxley Vale. Feedback received during the public exhibition was reviewed and incorporated, resulting in amendments to the initial draft that are now included in the adopted version.
- Following extensive consultation with the community, businesses and State Government agencies, Councillors resolved to adopt the Planning Proposal for the Establishment of the Tamworth Special Entertainment Precincts (SEPs). Council will now commence a 12-month trial period of the provisions associated with the Tamworth SEPs in the Central Business District and Sports and Entertainment Precinct. During the trial, community, businesses, and State Government agencies will have the opportunity to provide further feedback before a decision is made on whether to permanently establish SEPs in Tamworth.
- Councillors have received several recommendations made by the Tamworth Local Transport Forum including load limit changes in Calala and Nemingha. The recommendation by the forum would see the 25-tonne load restriction removed from O’Briens Lane, Nemingha, and the installation of a 25-tonne load restriction from Kurrawan Street, South Tamworth, to Burgess Lane, Calala. Under these modifications, concrete trucks or other construction traffic can still legally use Calala Lane if their delivery destination is within the zone (Calala) while it would also allow the GML and CML B-Doubles (19m, 23m and 25/26m) to access Loomberah Road via Nundle Road/O’Briens Lane without the need for a permit, whilst preventing highway traffic from detouring through Calala.

- Councillors discussed the Draft Centrepay Complaints and Procedures Policy, a new policy to Council which may be relevant to locals who make property-related debt payments via their Services Australia payment. The policy is based on the Services Australia model and will be on public exhibition in the coming days on Council’s website.

- Council investments are performing well off the back of the Reserve Bank of Australia rate rise in May, with some term deposit rates above 5% creeping into the portfolio. The rise does however mean sourcing loans for projects will see loan borrowing rates move closer to 6.5%. Council’s portfolio continues to perform above the three-month Bank Bill Swap rate.

- Council have agreed to the refinancing of the Variable Commonwealth Loan in relation to technology improvements. The refinancing of this loan will not increase Councils loan liability but change the structure of the loan from a variable to a fixed loan.

- Tonight, Councillors noted the Quarterly Budget Review Statements to 31 March 2026, noting grant fund payments are still to be made for the current financial year. Councillors also noted variations to the current Operational Plan and Budget 2025/2026. The 2026/2027 Operational Plan and Budget are currently on Public Exhibition and open for feedback.

- Councillors have tonight agreed to adopt the 2021 Code of Meeting Practice following a vote from the NSW Legislative Council to revoke the 2025 Code of Meeting Practice. Council will wait for further advice from the NSW Office of Local Government in relation to any revised Code of Meeting Practice.

- Councillors agreed to adopt the Tamworth Regional Council Night Time Economy Strategy 2026-2031 following public exhibition of the draft strategy in March and April. All submissions received during the exhibition period were considered, with Councillors provided a comprehensive summary of community feedback along with responses and/or amendments made in relation to the feedback. While many of the initiatives identified in the strategy are not yet funded, the framework will guide and inform Council’s future planning, with actions to be implemented across projects and activities that support and enhance the region’s night time economy.

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

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 14th June – 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

In Memoriam 

In loving memory of Janet Marilyn Harris

10.12.1952 - 02.06.2026.

Friends and family are warmly welcomed to attend Janet's memorial service at Barraba Golf Club on Friday the 19th of June at 1pm.

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Rhonda Maria Claydon *(Née Bridges)*

Passed peacefully
19th May, 2026 Aged 68 Years
surrounded by family

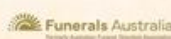
Much loved wife of Robert.
Loving mother and mother-in-law of
Lisa & Darren and Nick & Sheree.
Adored Nanny of Bailey, Levi, Lexi, Milla, Mason and Ella.
Cherished sister of her siblings.

The family and friends of RHONDA are warmly invited to attend her Funeral Service to be held in its entirety in the
Acacia Function Centre,
415 Burgmanns Lane, Hillvue commencing at
2.30pm, Friday 12th June, 2026.

Private Cremation.

Donations in lieu of flowers may be made to Breast Screen Tamworth.
A donation box will be available at the service.

Shaun Hamilton Funerals
125 MARIUS STREET
TAMWORTH NSW 2340 | 02 6766 1966



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.

From the Warrego Shears Facebook page

Barraba's Zac Malise wins the top prize!!
Sports Shear Queensland held at Charleville on
Saturday 6 June 2026

The Open Shearing & Open Woolhandling
Winners 🏆 Zac Malise and Alexander Schoff
Congratulations 🎉



HATS OFF TO COUNTRY



Grab your country boots and get ready for a weekend of incredible music during Hats Off to Country from 10-12 July. See artists performing right across Tamworth, with a mix of ticketed and free gigs. Highlights include Amber Lawrence, at The Press, on Tuesday 7 July for a pre-festival treat and local stars Aleyce Simmonds, Allison Forbes, Goldheist, Roz Pappalardo and Sally-Anne Whitten in *Strike a Chord* at the Tamworth Community Event Centre.

For a full line up, visit trcnews.au/hatsofftocountry



DON'T
WASTE
YOUR
CHANCE

Help shape the future of waste and recycling services across the Tamworth region by having your say on the Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy. We are developing a new Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy and want your feedback to help guide future waste, recycling and resource recovery services across the region. Residents and businesses are encouraged to have their say by completing the relevant survey via the link below. Community pop-up stalls will also be held in Tamworth, Nundle and Manilla in June. Surveys close 5pm Tuesday 30 June 2026 - trcnews.au/HaveyoursayWaste

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 our LGA. 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.

For more information and to apply visit.

<https://www.livehire.com/.../DKJG7/E6H06AQWA7/field-officer>

FLYING FERALS



We're proud to be supporting Tamworth Birdwatchers Feral Bird Control Program through our Annual Donations Program, with funds going towards helping protect native birdlife against invasive pests. Through our funding, Tamworth Birdwatchers enlisted the help of Tamworth Mens Shed to build a mobile, humane trapping trailer. Residents will soon be able to place captured feral birds in the trailer to be disposed of safely and ethically.

The Common Myna bird population is increasing in the Tamworth area. More people are becoming concerned about the devastating impact that these birds will have on native birds if they are not brought under control. Tamworth Birdwatchers Inc is the lead organisation for a feral bird control program that will offer local residents an option for the disposal of feral birds trapped at home. Our new purpose-built trailer provides a safe, convenient and humane euthanasia option.

What is a feral bird?

A feral bird is an introduced, non-native species of bird that has established a self-sustaining population in the wild. Several species of feral birds pose a general nuisance to humans, however the Common 'Indian' Myna and Common Starling pose the greatest threat to native bird populations; competing aggressively for nest hollows.

Why is the feral bird trailer needed?

Feral bird populations are increasing in the Tamworth Local Government Area. More people are becoming concerned about the devastating impact that these birds are having on native birds that will only increase if they aren't brought under control.

For most people, killing a bird, (even a feral one) is not pleasant. Our trailer provides local citizens with a convenient option for humane euthanasia. Our goal is to eliminate many more feral birds from the local environment, as more people become inspired to start trapping.

- Containment of feral birds* for a short period before humane euthanasia by a professional pest controller;
- Purpose-built locally by the Tamworth Community Men's Shed;
- Dual function – drop off point as well as luring feral birds in the trailer's vicinity;
- Food, water, perches and shelter for housed birds;
- Located on Council land (address to be advised);
- Available free of charge and 24/7; and
- Aligned with the NSW Government DPI Code of Practice and SOP for Humane Management of Pest Birds. See [Code of Practice and Standard Operating Procedures for the Effective and Humane Management of pest birds](#)

IMAGINE THE OPPORTUNITIES



If you'd like to add an extra deduction to your tax return, kids across our region would love you to donate to Dolly Parton's Imagination Library! Good literacy skills lead to improved opportunities personally and professionally. While Dolly doesn't fund the program here, we're proud to support it across our region along with many generous sponsors including our local McDonalds and Wests Entertainment Group.

All donations over \$2.00 to Dolly Parton's Imagination Library are tax deductible and can be a one-off, or regular contribution.

Donate online before tax time - trcnews.au/DPII



RSV Awareness Week: don't go unprotected this winter.

As RSV Awareness Week begins, the Australian Medical Association is urging Australians to speak with their GP about vaccination against respiratory syncytial virus. AMA President Dr Danielle McMullen said respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) was not just a winter nuisance — but could cause severe illness, hospitalisation and death.

“This week is an important reminder not to be complacent about a virus that can have serious consequences,” Dr McMullen said. “Too many people still think RSV is just a bad cold, but for some Australians it can be far more serious than that. There are now funded vaccines for people who need protection most, with the Federal Government this year adding the vaccine to the National Immunisation Program for people aged 75 years and older. This follows the addition of the maternal vaccine to the program last year.”

Dr McMullen said the effectiveness of the vaccine in preventing illness was very evident. “More than 225,000 mothers have received the maternal RSV vaccine to protect their babies from serious illness since the vaccines were first made available in February last year. This has resulted in a drop of more than 9 per cent in RSV cases for young children from 86,000 in 2024 to 78,000 in 2025.”

Dr McMullen encouraged people who have concerns or questions about vaccines to speak with their regular GP.

"Through our national 'Have the Jab Chat' campaign we are encouraging people who aren't sure about vaccines to have a conversation with their trusted GP," Dr McMullen said. "That conversation matters because vaccine advice is not one-size-fits-all. Your GP can explain what is recommended for you, including whether RSV vaccination should be part of your winter protection plan."

RSV is a common seasonal virus, but for babies, older Australians and people at higher risk of severe illness it can lead to serious complications, hospitalisation and death. Last year, RSV was the third most common cause of older adults being hospitalised with a respiratory viral infection and 587 deaths in Australia involved RSV. From 15 May 2026, RSV vaccination is available under the National Immunisation Program for people aged 75 and over, and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 60 and over. Maternal RSV vaccination is also available to eligible pregnant women to help protect newborns in their first months of life. More information for health professionals and consumers is available on the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing website.



**90 YEARS OF THE ROXY – AUSTRALIAN ARMY BAND
NEWCASTLE LIVE!**

Join us for a special evening of music as the Australian Army Band Newcastle takes to the stage as part of the 2026 Orange Festival celebrations.

Friday 3 July 2026, 6:30pm. The Roxy Theatre, Bingara
Celebrating 90 years of the iconic Roxy, this is a performance you won't want to miss! Gather your friends and family and enjoy an unforgettable night of live entertainment from one of Australia's premier military bands.

Book your tickets now:
<https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1588065>

The Australian Army Band Newcastle is helping kick off a huge Orange Festival weekend in Bingara!

From Brendan Moylan's weekly newsletter –



LANDCARE FUNDING

\$1.7 million was secured for Landcare programs across the Northern Tablelands under the latest round of the NSW Government's Landcare Enabling Program. The funding will be shared between North West Regional Landcarers Inc in Bingara (\$922,561) and the New England Landcare Network in Armidale (\$830,899). These funded projects are based on local priorities and community involvement. Whether it is restoring waterways, improving soil health, tackling erosion or helping landholders improve farm management practices, Landcare groups focus on practical outcomes that benefit both local communities and the environment.

It is great to secure this funding so these fantastic programs can continue.

FERAL PIGS

From Monday, 1 June, the month-long survey will gather reports on the impacts on feral pigs on properties for the last 12 months.

Share what you have seen on your property with the responses to help the LLS build a clearer picture of feral pig activity across NSW and support regional biosecurity planning and control efforts. To take the survey: www.nsw.gov.au/regional-and-primary-industries/biosecurity/pest-animals/vertebrate-pests/feral-pig-impacts-survey

HONEY BEE INDUSTRY

Shadow Minister for Agriculture Brendan Moylan has called on the Minns Labor Government to urgently engage with the Federal Government to protect the future of Australia's honey bee industry. Industry leaders have warned the varroa mite incursion in NSW is escalating rapidly and current measures are failing to manage and eradicate the spread of the mite.

"The NSW Government's response to the varroa mite outbreak has been too slow, too reactive and has left many beekeepers frustrated and unsupported," Mr Moylan said. "The beekeeping industry is incredibly important to agriculture across Australia and there are huge concerns for its future. Although there has been some effort to control the spread of the varroa mite, beekeeper and industry feedback indicates current control measures are not working. This is particularly concerning with the almond pollination season only a few weeks away, and the industry's heavy reliance on commercial honey bees. Industry representatives are reporting costs of tens of thousands of dollars for treatment which needs to be implemented regularly, however the same treatment can't be used repeatedly."

"There are also reports of resistance to synthetic treatments, high costs, reduced effectiveness, colony declines and further spread of the mite," Mr Moylan continued. "Without swift, targeted action, the varroa mite crisis could escalate into a food security crisis. I am urging the NSW Government to work with their Federal colleagues to step up surveillance, improve coordination with the industry and beekeepers on the ground, fast track access to effective varroa mite treatments and deliver stronger support to contain the spread before the impacts on the Industry, on pollination and on agriculture worsen."



How court cases against Woolworths and Coles could change the future of shopping in Australia.

Jeannie Marie Paterson, Professor of Law (consumer protections and credit law), The University of Melbourne

The consumer watchdog's Federal Court case against Woolworths over its "prices dropped" promotions is underway and will run into next week. This – and a separate court action against Coles – are crucial legal cases, with the potential for hundreds of millions of dollars in fines.

Around two-thirds of all Australian supermarket sales are made at Woolworths or Coles. So most Australians are likely to have seen some of the disputed "discounts" being fought over in these cases. Together, these cases will decide the line between unlawful trickery versus legitimate marketing tactics in how every retailer sells products to Australians.

'Illusory' or real discounts?

If you followed the Coles "down down" discounts trial in February, the underlying complaint in the current Woolworths case will feel familiar. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) alleges both supermarket giants misled shoppers over discounts on hundreds of items.

Interestingly, day one of the Woolworths case on Monday suggests the ACCC intends to run this court case a little differently. Instead of spending time on what the supermarket's strategy was, as in the Coles case, the ACCC cut straight to its core argument about misleading consumers.

The current Woolworths case is focused on a bundle of 12 everyday products, selected from a longer list of 266 raised by the ACCC. Those products include Tim Tams and Tiny Teddy biscuits, Fab laundry powder and Kleenex Aloe Vera tissues. The ACCC argues that after these products had been at a stable price for at least 180 days or more (excluding short fluctuations), Woolworths temporarily raised the price for 45 days (or less) by at least 15%.

Then it dropped the price below the recently raised price and labelled it as "prices dropped" – even though that cost was more, or at least as much, as the previous long-running price. The ACCC calls those marketed discounts "illusory".



A Woolworths label showing prices dropped from \$5 to \$4.50 for Oreos biscuits

Woolworths denies this, arguing its “prices dropped” labels were literally true: the price of a pack of Oreos biscuits really was \$5 the month before, before it was “dropped” to \$4.50. The ACCC has pointed out those Oreos cost \$3.50 before the price rise.

In court, Woolworths’ barrister Robert Yezerki SC focused on the supermarket’s defence that rising costs had forced up prices – and Australian shoppers recognised that: “They know what is happening in the economy, and they are indeed expecting prices to rise.”

So, the Federal Court will have to decide whether an average supermarket shopper thought Woolworths’ “prices dropped” discount ticket meant dropped from a long-term price, or dropped from an always fluctuating price.

What if the supermarkets win?

Closing its court case in February, Coles said the ACCC hadn’t provided any evidence to prove “ordinary reasonable consumers” had understood its “down down” discounts meant the new price was lower than a past “regular” price (as opposed to the most recent past price).

If the Federal Court accepts the supermarkets’ arguments that consumers expected prices to change because of inflation, and that their discount tickets were strictly true, it would be significant. It would send a message that while marketing has to be factually correct, consumers should understand that prices always fluctuate, so promoted discounts are just a point-in-time price.

In other words, shoppers would need to keep a closer eye on prices day to day.

Huge fines if the ACCC wins

An ACCC win would mean every major Australian retailer – not just supermarkets – needed to review their discount

strategies. It would mean Australian Consumer Law applied more strictly in future, ensuring the whole impression presented by a discount ticket was accurate. The loss would also be backed up by considerable penalties, possibly reaching hundreds of millions of dollars for each supermarket.

The supermarkets’ alleged contraventions took place in 2021–22. During that time, penalties under Australian Consumer Law rose from a maximum of A\$10 million per contravention, to the greater of \$50 million, three times the benefit obtained, or 30% of adjusted turnover during the breach period per contravention – for every product and every promotion.

The ACCC has made clear it is seeking a “significant penalty” if it wins, plus community service orders funding meal-delivery charities. Whichever way this judgment lands, two class actions representing consumers are already waiting in the wings.

Setting rules for truth in advertising

A decade ago, the ACCC took on both supermarkets over allegations of unconscionable treatment of suppliers. Coles settled its case and paid a penalty of \$10 million. But Woolworths went to court and won; its conduct was deemed “not unconscionable”.

Despite those different outcomes, the court cases did have an impact. They led to the introduction of a binding Food and Grocery Code of Conduct, which came into effect in 2025. It aims to promote good faith bargaining by supermarkets and protect suppliers if they insist on their legal rights.

There is no date yet for when we’ll have the judgments on the Woolworths and Coles cases, both being heard by Justice Michael O’Byrne. His judgments will effectively set the rules for what “truth in advertising” means for every retailer in the country in the future.


Message from the Editor

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

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

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

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



PHIL DENYER
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Rugby Union Match Report – Saturday 6 June

The Barraba Rams hosted Robb College on Saturday in two entertaining contests.

The women were first to take the field, looking to bounce back after their first loss of the season. Robb started strongly and led 22-10 at halftime, but Barraba returned with renewed determination and dominated field position in the second half. An intercept try from Charlie Norton sparked the comeback, while strong runs from Emily Kelso and debutant Ruby Smith kept Robb under pressure. Barraba crossed for three second-half tries to complete a remarkable comeback and secure a 29-22 victory.

Try Scorers: Ally Smith, Kiah Newell, Charlie Norton, Emily

Kelso, Lily Bradshaw. **Conversions:** Charlie Norton (2)

Players' Player: Charlie Norton and Ruby Smith

Coach's Points

🏆 Lily Bradshaw

🏆 Charlie Norton

🏆 Ally Smith and Amie Middlemiss

Following the women's match, both teams joined the men on the field for a minute's silence in honour of recently passed club member Bruce McNeil. Barraba Rugby Club extends its sincere condolences to the McNeil family.

The men then took on Robb College in a thrilling encounter. After trailing early, Barraba fought back through tries to Jarrod Petrus, Cody Townsend and Khadyn Mason to take a 20-17 lead into halftime. Brandon Newell extended the advantage early in the second half, but Robb clawed their way back and eventually regained the lead with 10 minutes remaining. A late attacking opportunity saw Barraba opt to chase the win rather than take the points, but the gamble fell just short as Robb held on for a narrow 29-27 victory.

Despite the result, the young Rams side showed significant improvement and plenty of promise against a strong Robb outfit.

Try Scorers: Brandon Newell, Jarrod Petrus (2), Khadyn Mason, Cody Townsend. **Conversions:** Jarrod Petrus (1)

Players' Player: Khadyn Mason

Coach's Points


🏆 Khadyn Mason

🏆 Nick Sweeney

🏆 James Brand & Jarrod Petrus

Next weekend the Walcha Rams travel to Barraba for **Old Boys Day**, with a luncheon for past players and members from 1:00pm and the men's match kicking off at 3:15pm.

The women will enjoy a bye before both teams travel to face Albies on Saturday 20 June.



OLD BOYS DAY
13TH JUNE

★ *Calling all Old Boys!* ★

We'd especially love to see those who played in the late 80's, as we celebrate the **1986 TEAM - 40 YEARS ON** from our first Grand Final win!

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS 1986 - 2026

1PM CATCH UP AT THE CLUBHOUSE

3PM BARRABA VS WALCHA

Memories. Mates. Footy.
LET'S MAKE IT ONE TO REMEMBER!