

The Manning Community News

DECEMBER

SHARING COMMUNITY NEWS AND VIEWS

2015

This paper is being published as a community service to provide readers with factual and independent coverage of news, people and events in our district. If you have a story idea please contact us.
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FREE

AND PEACE AND GOODWILL TO ALL...

Does it seem to you, that perhaps more than ever before, the thoughts and wishes for the festive season and for the New Year, have taken on a new and complex ring?

It seems at times our world has gone mad. Life and events are not as we know them or expect them to be; terrorism, conflict over the environment from CSG and fossil fuels, confronting photos of orangutans, koalas and polar bears among many losing their habitat, the Ice epidemic, domestic violence, the economy, our own futures. The whole box and dice is a worry.

And yet.

And yet there are moments of joy within our families, our towns and villages, as well as the momentary global coming together in times of tragedy and hope such as we have seen in Paris.

While we may wish for world peace and prosperity, it's not going to happen any time soon. We can be glad we are not living in Syria, we can criticise our politicians, we can fret about the Aussie dollar, trees being cut down, the looming spectre of mines and fracking, but what can we really do about it?

Perhaps it all comes down to those simple words - Do unto others.

If we pause a moment before growling about a sourpuss neighbour, consider do you really know what's going on in

their life? Or what has happened to that person in the course of years to bring them to this miserable condition. Have you bothered to stop and ask how they are, would they like to come in for a cup of tea, a chat? My grandmother was a great one for baking sponge cakes in the fuel stove in Price Street Wingham and delivering them to newcomers, strugglers and the "out of towners" on the fringes of society.

Are we all too time poor to take time to observe old fashioned courtesies? We have the opportunity to invest in a friendship, offer a helping hand, or simply listen, but do we?

Yes, we have rotten roads and rising rates and the spectre of losing our land to greed and unimaginative planning and thinking. But look out the window, do you see a tree, a garden, hear a bird, or know they're just a short walk away?

What we have is precious, we need to protect our community and be grateful.

At a certain age one can look back and lament that it's not how it used to be back then. Or was it ever thus; finding a good job, working to pay bills, raise a family, achieve a dream, enjoy life a little.

As the children of today step up to their future, hopefully they do not fear the chaos and uncertainty, choosing instead the cheerful arrogance of ambition, that their dreams and achievements will

carry them forward to a new world, different to what we know, but that is their journey to make.

If we can instill in a child the seed of ambition tempered with humility, the notion to be gracious in defeat, to applaud others, to be grateful for all they have and do, and be thankful for the gifts of love and sharing a family gives them, and a desire to make their world a calmer, safer, clever place, and above all Do Unto Others, then, perhaps, all may be well.

Take a moment to draw a breath of fresh air, admire our scenery, smile at a stranger and be thankful we are where we are and who we are.

Perhaps we can all do a little better; be a little more thoughtful, be a little more generous in life and spirit, and allow the common good to prevail. It's a small step to take, but isn't that how all journeys begin, with hope and optimism?

May you travel well on life's journey.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from

The Manning Community News.

It's Not That Bad Santa!



We're not sure if Santa is excited at the Brushy Cutting view or upset his sleigh threw a reindeer on our roads!

SAY NO TO DODGY PRAWNS!

We are lucky to have access to good fresh local prawns. But some prawns we buy are good, and some prawns are dodgy. Some are pretty bad for the ocean. Some are pumped with antibiotics. Some are even connected to human slavery. It might shock you to hear that 70% of the seafood we eat in Australia is caught overseas, and often in ways that exploit workers and harm our oceans.

The good news is that prawns can be farmed and fished sustainably and ethically. We can make the choice.

When Paul Hogan famously threw 'another shrimp on the barbie' in 1984, he probably gave very little thought to where it came from.

Back then, it was almost certainly an Australian prawn, probably caught by a local trawler. The proportion of seafood we imported was much lower then, than now and prawn farming was almost non-existent.

Prawns are now one of the world's most widely traded and consumed seafood products, the majority grown in

prawn farms that now cover millions of hectares of coastline across Asia. And if you've visited some of them you might think twice about that prawn laksa.

In three decades, global production of prawns has increased almost twenty-fold and demand shows no signs of abating. The market price of imported prawns, once a luxury item, has plummeted and Australians now eat about 50,000 tons of prawns each year.

But our hunger for cheap imported prawns comes at a cost.

Many Australians tend to prefer to buy local even if it costs more than the imports, and almost a third of what we produce is exported to markets in China, Japan and the USA where consumers pay a much higher price for our highly regulated produce. Meanwhile we import almost 40,000 tonnes farmed in China and South East Asia.

Greenpeace have released a dodgy versus good prawn guide on the Greenpeace website. It makes interesting if depressing reading. Easier to say - "Make it Australian please."

CROWDY SCHOOL SAGA CONTINUES

I have just read your article on the Crowdy School saga and as the last full time Principal at the school, I would like to comment.

I had been at CHPS for several years leading up to the closure of the school until health issues took over and a series of relieving Principals took the responsibility of finally closing the school.

The clientele at the school was made up of a handful of local children and students who were deemed to be 'out of zone' enrolments. This is not entirely correct according to the Department's own Policy that advocates choice between accessible local schools. However with the few local enrolments and a handful of students with unidentified special needs, the school was a viable proposition. Many parents and carers didn't like to have their children "labelled" but eventually by working closely with the families many students with special needs were assessed and provided with additional support.

Initially I had the support of the Inspector (title changes regularly) who

could see the improving outcomes for the students, particularly those with behaviour issues. As our reputation grew we enrolled several students with learning and behaviour issues, always ensuring that we didn't over commit in the interest of the safety of the students already enrolled. Many of these students were in Foster care and among the most needy I have had the pleasure to teach.

Successive Governments continued to seek cost saving measures and a number of small schools across the state were silently closed down during the period 2010 and 2015. CHPS remained viable until I was 'instructed' not to take any students not living in Crowdy Head without permission from District Office. I was particularly saddened by the non enrolment of an eleven year old autistic child with a horrendous attendance record due to this direction. The young lady found it difficult to cope in a large school situation and avoided attending. Her Mother claimed that CHPS was the first school that her daughter responded to in a positive manner.

For several years leading up to the closure of CHPS I raised the issue with a number of Inspectors and sought some direction as to providing a succession plan for the site. Several initiatives by the wonderful dedicated staff were tried without support or encouragement from the Department. We provided many opportunities including Professional Development, Community meetings, Environmental and Aboriginal Education programmes for visiting students and also Leadership programmes for student bodies and Aboriginal students. With limited resources the staff ensured that we provided a worthwhile experience for all who visited our school.

I had a discussion with our local member, Leslie Williams who indicated an interest in my ideas for the future use of the school and acting on her invitation I sent a submission via the Inspector only to find out that several months had passed and Ms Williams never received it.

Essentially I proposed that for the cost of installing a dormitory to

accommodate students and a couple of mentors we could run an Aboriginal Leadership program for students between Newcastle and the border. Students to be bussed in on Monday and returned on Friday. By targeting Year 4 (10 year olds) over a ten week period we could ensure that Literacy and numeracy skills were well within their cohort. Students would also undergo Aboriginal Education and Leadership courses, empowering them to make positive decisions leading into adolescence (where we lose a lot of our Koori kids) and to be positive role models for the community.

This is just one proposal that was met with blank stares from the local Educational leadership at the time. As your article indicated there are several worthwhile community uses for this valuable site. I hope the community keep up the pressure to ensure that good use is made of the site. I, for one would hate see a spread of McMansions appear like acne upon this community jewel.

Chris Tsembis

FURTHER CROWDY MEMORIES

I was very saddened to hear that Crowdy Head School has closed as my father, Kevin Leitch, taught there in the 1940s and early 1950s and he just loved his time there.

My father- Kevin John Leitch (1928-2004) was a born teacher. He trained at Armidale teachers' college in the mid 1940s, where he met my mother June Dixon. He was appointed to Crowdy Head PS soon after graduating, as the sole teacher. The ensuing years at Crowdy were some of his most loved memories.

He was a young enthusiastic teacher who relished the role and spoke on many occasions of the wonderful years he spent at Crowdy with the children whose parents were mainly fishermen.

He loved the outdoor lifestyle in that idyllic location and would recount tales of taking the children down to the



The Hogans from Harrington and baby Sue

beach and chasing the stingrays in the shallows with sticks.

He enjoyed the 'family dynamic' of having a small group of students of varying ages and how the older ones helped out with looking after the younger ones.

He boarded in Harrington with the Hogans- who tragically lost their only son in an accident- and so took Dad

into their home and treated him like a son. He would hitch a ride on the milk cart in the mornings to get to school.

As he was courting my mother at the time, she would come up to Crowdy for the weekend and they would spend a romantic afternoon flying dad's remote control plane!

The years as sole teacher at Crowdy Head were magical ones for my father who always spoke of them as "dream years". Never again would he ever eat fish or calamari as tasty as the fresh catches he enjoyed at Crowdy.

He thoroughly enjoyed being invited back to the Centenary celebrations at the school in October 2002 as a guest speaker. He loved reliving "the good old days" and speaking with others associated with the school and seeing that it was still such a vibrant community school.

How sad that the motto on the centenary cake was "the school with a view to the future" and that the Department of Education has had to close it. Hopefully the school land and buildings will go on and continue to provide education in some form for the community and live up to the school motto.

After my father's death in 2004 we found a number of old black and white photos preserving

some of his memories of the wonderful years had at Harrington and Crowdy Head PS.

He left to go to Sydney in 1956 to Artarmon PS- after being inspired by the progressive educational reforms occurring under the principal-ship of the great educator Harold Matthews. And so began the next phase of his career inspiring OC students for the next 22 years. My mother also taught at Artarmon in the infants and my sister and I also went to Artarmon so the whole family set off every day to go to school.

Unsurprisingly my sister and I both went on to be school teachers. I am still currently Deputy Principal at Eastwood PS in Sydney.

Dad married my mother in May 1955 and Mum conducted the Taree Community Choir in December 1955 in the Messiah (with dad singing baritone and my grandfather accompanying) while she was six months pregnant with me!

Sue Leitch, Sydney.



At Crowdy School



the proud young teacher



Crowdy's centenary celebration cakes

NEW YEAR GARDENING

January and February can be challenging months for gardeners. The effects of sunlight during the two hottest months of the year can be more severe in our lovely, pollution-free Manning Valley than it is in metropolitan areas. Rainfall can also be well below average in January and mulched garden beds will help to preserve water. Young plants will also benefit from some light shade during the hottest part of the day until they are well-established. Pieces of shade cloth or old lightweight curtains as tent-flies over beds are sufficient to give them relief.



Save water

Save juice and soft drink bottles, cut off the base of each bottle, remove the lid, and bury them neck downwards into soil near plants that suffer from water fluctuations. The bottles will allow you to water mulched garden beds quickly. This method also saves water as the irrigation goes directly to the root area without any wastage.

For gardeners who have time to spend in the garden at this time of year, the following gardening advice for January and February is suitable for most areas of the Manning Valley. Further advice on individual plants and tips on how to address gardening problems can be found on my blog, aussieorganicgardening.com

For gardeners who do not use moon planting: sow or plant out any of the following list at any time this month, although you may find germination rates are poor when the Moon is in Last Quarter phase.

During Last Quarter phase: [No sowing from all day on 2nd to 10th January or between all day on 1st and morning of 9th February.] A good phase for removing weeds that can be hosts for garden pests and for general garden maintenance.

Before Full Moon: [from all day on 11th to 16th and all day on 18th to 23rd January. From all afternoon on 10th to all day on 14th and from all day on 16th to 4:20 pm on 22nd February.] In January and February, bush beans, cabbage, suitable lettuce, silver beet (pre-soak seed) and sweet corn can be sown directly into garden beds. Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, leek, spring onions, ageratum, stock and verbena can be sown in punnets or planted out.

In January, there is still time to sow cucumber, rockmelon, summer squash, watermelon, zucchini, nasturtium and sunflower directly into beds in frost-free areas, and French marigold and petunia can be planted out.

In late February, bulb fennel, radicchio, cornflower, dianthus, Iceland poppy, nemesia, nigella and statice can be sown in punnets or planted out. Sweet basil can also be sown in frost-free areas.

Full Moon phase: [from all day on 25th to 31st January and from all day on 23rd to 29th February.] During Full Moon phase in January and February, beetroot (pre-soak seed), carrot, parsnip and radish can be sown directly into beds, and lemon



grass and watercress can be sown or planted out. Mango and pineapple can also be sown or planted out in frost-free areas. Divide bearded iris and take cuttings of lavender, marjoram, mint, oregano, rosemary, thyme, watercress, carnation and pelargonium.

In January, also sow or plant out gazania and sow potato tubers in late January. Take cuttings of sage.

In February, swede turnip, and turnip can be sown directly into beds, also potato tubers in frost-free areas. Mint and watercress can be sown or planted out. Avocado trees can be planted in late February in frost-free areas.

Wishing all of you a happy, healthy 2016.

Lyn Bagnall

ANTIQUES & COLLECTABLES

Collect today for an investment in the future

Often we make the most interesting discoveries when we least expect to find them. They turn up in the most unusual places.

Jenny and I were exploring the Canberra area and we called in at an antique shop at Hall, on a day trip to Yass. I went in and looked around and there sitting on a cabinet was an old pond yacht in a sorry state. I recognised the shape as a "Balmain Bug," a sought after yacht from the 1920 – 30s. I made the interested customer enquiry and got the response, "You don't really want that old thing. It's in really poor condition." My response was I liked the shape and the age and could he put a price on it. We made the deal and I walked away a happy man. I had seen these restored and they always look good.

After a number of years of enjoying this little yacht I decided I would test my buying power. I had started selling a few things on Ebay and

decided to try it, unrestored, as I bought it, lots of photos and an accurate description. I decided that I wanted to at least double my money and made a starting price of \$49.00. Well, eighty bids later and \$1485 as the final bid I was packing up that little yacht and sending it to Canada!! I was really surprised, but with a big smile on my face.

Another really interesting find was at the Taree Collectors Club's Antiques and Collectables Fair where a great old friend of ours, Ian, had brought along a family relic that he thought went back to the 1700s. Ian has just completed his autobiography, "The bone in the Fishcake" in his ninety – fourth year after a quarter century labour of love. He was clearing out some things and was happy to part with this item. (see photo)

Ian explained that it was the figure of an angel, hand painted and very uniquely done. The most interesting part was that it had been done on a vertebra bone of a horse. These type of religious relics were kept

in a special place in the household, keeping watch over those whom dwelt there.

It remains a treasured possession in our collection reminding us of the ingenuity of our forefathers and also of a good and really interesting friend.

Anyone needing assistance with antique appraisals phone Rex – 0427 880 546



18th Century hand painted angel

JUST KEEP DANCING . . .!

There are some people you meet who make you laugh and smile. Neville Munro is like that. Maybe it's the show biz in him. He's a dancer - Gene Kelly eat your heart out! And dancing is his life.



The good old days

After years of dancing his way around Australia and overseas, Neville settled in the Manning in 1974 to devote himself to teaching dance. His wife Dawn loves to dance too and she taught ballet and Neville tap and jazz. Their first studio was at Nabiac.

Neville has been teaching dance and doing the choreography for shows ever since he can remember. His mother, who loved to dance, took him along to dancing classes in Sydney when he was 5 years old and Neville's been dancing ever since.

Tours Overseas

'I did nine years touring Australia with Sorlie's Revue. That was a major company who toured revue and tent shows, to country towns in New South Wales and Queensland,' explained Neville. 'They started in

the mid 1940s to the early 1960s. They had all kinds of acts. I was only a young fella then but I learned about show business! I had different partners, ladies and fellows, and we went all the way from Newcastle through Queensland. Broken Hill and Cairns were big stops. The tents were huge with a proper stage and a band for all the different acts. Jenny Howard was a big star who came out from England and did several tent shows with us.

'Then in 1955 I teamed up with two other boys as a trio called the Three Munros. We were just mates, not really related, and we went to England and stayed nine years. We toured the continent, did shows in Paris with Tommy Trinder, the English comedian, along with singers Vera Lyn and also Gracie Fields. We did a lot of acrobatic stuff at that time but then we split up, one of the boys got married and so me and the other fellow went solo for a bit. I then teamed up with another boy and we toured all over England as acrobatic dancers.'

Return Home

Neville came back home in 1963 and met and married his wife Dawn who ran a ballet school in Sydney.

'Funny how time goes by. Your life is like in three sort of patterns. Young, middle age and old age. I started as a young boy touring all over NSW, performed for the prisons and the old peoples homes. Then when I came back from England another boy and I started an act and we did all the pubs, as the hotels were the places to see shows then.'

After an accident which 'did my leg in for a bit' stopped him performing, Neville went back to his old job at Homebush Abattoirs. His dance partner got a job performing with Carlotta at the infamous "Les Girls", Sydney's first transvestite nightclub.

'Dawn and I both did ballroom dancing in Sydney as well as

teaching. We love to dance. I have had dancing around me all my life.'

A Dancing Family

Is it any wonder their family are nearly all dancers.

'Our daughter Belinda now runs the ballet school we started in Taree and all my granddaughters dance competitively. Dawn and I have had hundreds of students in Taree over the years. I worked for the RSL for 14 years and did the choreography for all their weekend shows. They were big events, six dancers in the line up. When we first came up here I was just doing general teaching, mostly tap, but I came across a young fellow in Newcastle who was a brilliant tap dancer, Les Griffiths, and we teamed up and I became an adjudicator and examiner for the Les Griffith Tap Dance Academy which has studios everywhere now. He created all the dance groups like the boys in Tap Dogs. He did the whole syllabus and trains all the teachers too. I'm still with them, been there since 1985.'

Creativity

Neville, who is pushing 86, still teaches dance and the walls of the studio at his home in Rainbow Flat are covered with awards and photographs. He loves the creativity of dance.

'You can watch other peoples' style and maybe see some little thing you like and so you can incorporate that into a routine. But the ants pants as far as I'm concerned was Gene Kelly... so original. Such a talent. I'm always looking for talent. With all the kids I've taught you're always looking for that bit of magic. I'm teaching a girl at the moment, she's a brilliant tap dancer, but unreliable with that teenage take-it-or-leave-it attitude, when she's got an amazing gift! Some of the kids win a lot of money in the eisteddfods. One boy I taught has been working in Japan for three years.'

Neville does a lot of shows to raise money for charity. And he's inordinately proud of all his boy dancers who have gone on to work in show business and become teachers too. He points to a photo.

'That's Luke. He's another Fred Astaire, he is. He's lovely. He's just 18, been with me since he was five years old. He's starting uni soon, but boy is he a magic dancer.'

Not surprisingly his students all remain fond of Neville and he has an extended family of students from over the years who all come back to see him, have a cup of tea and tell him their news.

End Of An Era

While there are not the revue shows around now, Neville feels dance as entertainment was cut off when Hip Hop started.

'They changed from the style and technique of ballet to the rougher side of life, like rap...all very clever but not my cup of tea! I like proper dancing and nice music!

His enthusiasm, ready laughter and energy belie his years. He loves seeing the little ones go on stage for the first time, all dressed up and full of nervous giggles.

'The littlies make mistakes but they enjoy it and they always want to go back on stage again. If they don't try it they'll never know.'

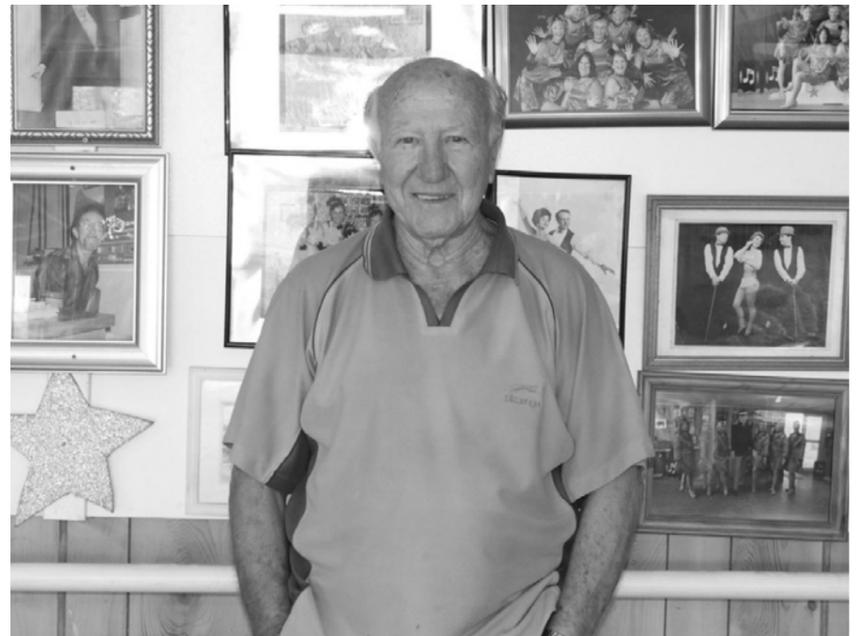
Neville can be a tough taskmaster, drilling the ladies groups through their amateur dance routines until they're ready to drop.

He gives a wicked grin, 'Ah you've got to have a bit of fun,' don't you! And you know what I always tell my students when they are in a show . . . if the music stops, just keep going and smiling!'

It's a bit like Neville's philosophy on life, 'Keep dancing! That's show business!'



Di dances with Neville



Neville Munro today

WHAT A RECORD!

Guinness World Records 2016 – Published by Guinness World Records. Distributed by MacMillan.

How the Guinness Book of Records fascinated us as children! Snakes with 12 heads, women who ate 700 cream buns... There was nothing people would not do, no records which couldn't be bettered, no person or activity so bizarre it wasn't included to make us gasp in fear and astonishment.

In 2004, a Turkish man won the record of setting the record for squirting milk out of his eye and into a coffee nearly three metres away. He apparently sucked it up through his nose first. Why anyone would even consider trying to set the record for that is hard to understand, but Mr. Mehmet Yilmaz did.

In August 2010 doctors removed the world largest tumour from a woman in Argentina. It weighed 24 kilos. Then there was the retired ratcatcher who ate 36 cockroaches in one minute in 2001.

These days the Guinness Book of Records is mostly not quite so bizarre – or dangerous. They have decided they will not accept records that could cause injury or even death to the competitors. They won't accept anything that could cause the killing or harming of animals. For example, there was the "world heaviest fish record" and other fat pets, but subsequently owners fed their animals so much when trying to win a record that it was unhealthy, even deadly, and such entries were removed.

All alcohol, wine and beer drinking records were stopped for the same reason, and they no longer took

submissions from people wanting to try for the record for eating trees or bicycles. Sword swallowing was closed.

But it is not unhealthy to get married, and the oldest bride now recorded was 102 when she married her toy boy, aged 83. They are both from NSW.

As of 2011, it is required that all entries into things like "the worlds largest pizza" be fully edible, and distributed to the public so as to prevent food wastage.

In case you think the 62nd edition is only left with the boring bits, far from it. Did you know a part of Venezuela gets nearly 250 lightning strikes per square kilometre every year? You probably had heard that the UN figure for plastic is 46,000 pieces for every square kilometre of ocean. What has the most acute sense of smell in the world? The Emperor Moth!

There are many sad things too – extinction of animals. The last Chinese River Dolphin was seen in 2006.

And I'm not sure how healthy it is to cover your face in clothes pegs. Silvio Sabba clipped on 51 in 60 seconds. It doesn't say how long he left them on...

The worlds oldest octoplets are now seven, all healthy and their 33 year old mother looks fine, too.

The oldest conjoined twins still alive are now 63 and they share the lower body and two legs. One pair of female twins, who has been joined for 53

years at the head, startled their doctors recently when Dori declared himself as a transgender male.

There's a whole section on records in pulling, pushing, throwing, juggling, lifting, smashing, balancing, most telephone directories torn up, and 'most spears caught from a spear gun under water.' That has to be dangerous.

Gardens and farms produce extraordinary and giant foods, like a carrot weighing eight kilos.

A lot of entries of course have to do with measurements, and one of the facts is that the earliest known standardised measurement was the cubit. It was used in Egypt in 3000 BC and was the length from the elbow to the end of the middle finger.

Predictable, as the world changes there are now chapters on the new technologies, digitisation, science and engineering, miracle materials. And one on Eco Cities. Singapore has the tallest vertical garden at about 2289 metres, which is about 26 stories.

For the sporty kids there is still a huge chapter on sports records. To finish on a local note, the longest public broadcast, was in 2011, with Richard Glover and Peter Fitzsimmons on ABC 702

It went on for 24 hours.

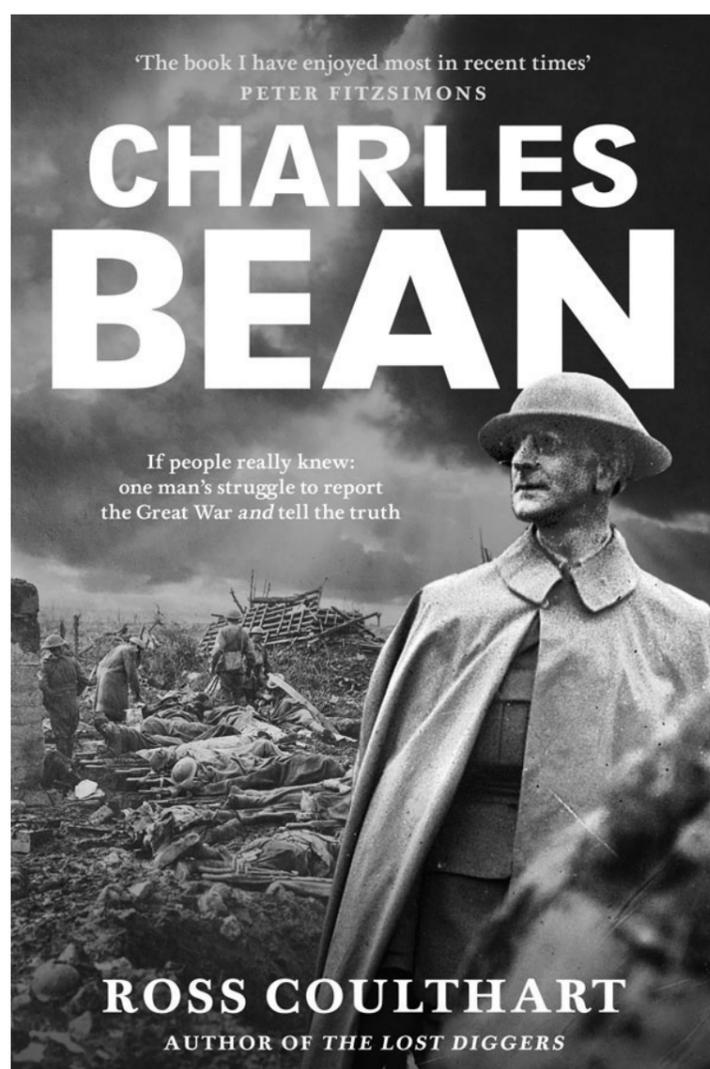
SW



The most balls caught by a dog with the paws in one minute is 14 and was achieved by Purin and her owner Makoto Kumagai (both Japan) in Sakura, Chiba, Japan, on 22 March 2015



Kim Goodman (USA) can pop her eyeballs to a protrusion of 12 mm (0.47 in) beyond her eye sockets. Her eyes were measured in Istanbul, Turkey, on 2 November 2007



CHARLES BEAN

If People Really Knew – Published by Harper Collins.

Ross Coulthart,

Joint winner of the Australian History Prize in the prestigious 2015 Prime Minister's Literary Awards

Charles Bean saw mote combat than any other man in World war One. He was a firsthand witness to every major battle involving Australian soldiers in the Great War.

Journalist Ross Coulthart delves into Bean's now classic post-war official history and also examines his experiences revealed in his diaries and what he actually wrote as journalist during the war.

In his author's note Coulthart writes:

'As a journalist who was embedded with Australian and American military units in east Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan, and who has also operated in conflict zones independently, I have long been intrigued by the unique position that Charles Bean found himself in in 1915: the incredible access and relative journalistic freedom he enjoyed in Gallipoli and on the Western Front has no equivalent today. He spoke to frontline commanders in their headquarters and then often ventured unsupervised onto the battlefield frontlines to see for himself what was going on, a privilege few if any reporters have enjoyed since. It gave Bean an extraordinary understanding of the course of the war and

the failure of tactics employed by the commanders. Bean also promoted the view in his writing that Australia's very sense of itself as a nation was moulded by the experiences of its men under fire - that they went to war for the British Empire and came home with a new sense of Australian identity and a distinct national pride in what they had achieved on the battlefield. Bean's admiration for Australia's volunteer army was intense, and personal; so many of the officers he befriended and admired were to fall during those long grinding years of war. He crafted a powerful legend about the Anzacs that endures today.'

It is a riveting, moving and well researched and written account of an Australian legend.

RECIPES

CHILLI CRAB

The Blue Ducks 'Real Food' - published by Plum.

2 blue swimmer crabs
90 g desiccated coconut
juice of 1 lemon
1 red Asian shallot, finely sliced
1 teaspoon chilli flakes
½ bunch of coriander, leaves picked, roots reserved for the chilli mix
vegetable oil, to fry
400 ml coconut milk

Chilli mix
2½ tablespoons vegetable oil
3 red Asian shallots, roughly chopped
4 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
50 g peeled ginger, roughly chopped
6–8-cm lemongrass stalk, white part only, finely chopped
4 long red chillies, roughly chopped
½ bunch of coriander roots, roughly chopped (see above)
60 g palm sugar
2½ tablespoons fish sauce
250 g cherry tomatoes

To make the chilli mix, place a medium saucepan over high heat and add the oil. Once hot, add the shallots, garlic, ginger, lemongrass, chilli and coriander root to the pan while stirring constantly. Everything should start to caramelise pretty quickly. Add the palm sugar, which will melt and make a spicy caramel. Keep cooking until the chillies are soft, add the fish sauce, and continue to cook until the liquid has mostly gone. Add the cherry tomatoes, crushing them with the back of a wooden spoon as you stir. Keep stirring the mix until the tomatoes have completely broken down. Add the mix to a blender and process until smooth, or keep it a bit rough, it's up to you. Remove the top shell from the crabs, discard the gills and set the mustard aside (only the really yellow parts). Cut each crab into four pieces.

Mix the coconut, lemon juice, sliced shallots and chilli flakes in a small bowl.

Tear in the coriander leaves and work into a rough sambal with your fingers.

Place a heavy-based frying pan over high heat, add a splash of oil and heat until shimmering and almost smoking. Add the chilli mix and the reserved mustard from the crab and fry for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Add the crab pieces and coconut milk and cover for a minute or so to bring the liquid to the boil quickly. Once the liquid is at a vigorous boil, remove the lid and cook for 2 minutes – the key here is a quick cooking time, as the meat will start to break down into little pieces if overcooked.

Once cooked, tip the crab into a large bowl along with all the sauce, scatter over a handful of the coconut sambal and serve.

Serves 2



APPLE AND BERRY CRUMBLE

Pete Evans 'Fast Food For Busy Families' - published by Plum.

4 apples (about 750 g in total), peeled, cored and chopped into 2 cm pieces
85 g (scant ¼ cup) honey
1 tablespoon coconut oil
finely grated zest of 1 orange
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon vanilla powder or 1 vanilla pod, split and seeds scraped
320 g fresh or frozen mixed berries (such as blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, blackberries)
coconut yoghurt, to serve

Crumble topping
100 g (1 cup) almond or hazelnut meal
65 g (½ cup) activated macadamia nuts, finely chopped
60 g (½ cup) activated pistachio nuts, finely chopped
40 g (⅔ cup) shredded coconut
4 tablespoons coconut oil, melted
85 g (scant ¼ cup) honey
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
pinch of sea salt

Preheat the oven to 160°C.

To make the filling, combine the apple, honey, coconut oil, orange zest, cinnamon, vanilla pod and seeds or powder and 3 tablespoons of water in a saucepan. Cover and cook over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, until the apple softens, about 5 minutes. Add the berries, cover and cook for 3–4 minutes until the berries start to burst. Remove the vanilla pod (if using).

Meanwhile, to make the crumble topping, place all the ingredients in a bowl and mix well.

Spoon the filling evenly into a 1.5 litre baking dish. Sprinkle on the crumble topping to cover. Bake for 15–18 minutes until the crumble is golden brown, checking from 10 minutes onwards to make sure it doesn't burn. Remove from the oven and allow to stand for 2–3 minutes before serving. Serve with coconut yoghurt.

Serves 6



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YOUR SAY . . .

These opinions are those of the contributor and not of the Manning Community News. We welcome letters from our community provided they are not defamatory or litigious.

Dear Editor,

Below is the letter I have sent to Premier Mike Baird. I thought it time someone stood up for businesses and people in Gloucester, where the debate for the future has been hijacked by a Council that has lost its way. I think Lawrie Ayres' letter (Nov edition) addresses much of the misinformation peddled by the anti-CSG group and Councilors in Gloucester and is instructive for everyone in this debate. Obviously, my letter is in stark contrast to Terry Stanton's contributions to your November edition. He and I agree on one thing though and that is we want to grow our country towns and communities.

John Herd
Gloucester

Dear Mr Premier

I write to you as a constituent of Gloucester. You could describe me as a typical member of the silent majority that have seen enormous damage done by a vocal group of people who have publicly railed against the expansion of the coal mine in the area and for some time now, AGL's CSG license. No reasonable person could ignore the amount of misinformation that has been peddled by the anti-CSG proponents. It has been a campaign which has clearly damaged retail business and property values and any future potential for growth in our area.

By now you would be aware, that at its last meeting on Wednesday November 18, our local Council passed a motion to request the NSW Government buy back AGL's CSG license. This decision was made as a response to Mayor Rosenblum raising the emotive and tragic suicide of a farmer in Chinchilla. At the emotionally charged meeting, community members, predominantly of the anti-CSG group gave accounts of the personal stress, depression, vilification they have suffered over their actions in the CSG issue. It is difficult to feel too much sympathy towards these people, who have demonstrably and consistently shown no consideration for other members of the Gloucester community affected by their actions.

That said, Mayor Rosenblum and his council have to take a large amount of responsibility for the division amongst Gloucester's citizens by taking sides in the debate from the outset. Firstly, they have aided, abetted and given succor to the anti-CSG people, by ignoring a request from the police, that they deny permission to this group to allow a primitive campsite on Jacks Road. The purpose of the campsite was to allow the so called Ground Swell group and their 'Rent-a-Crowd' to stage protests against AGL's four CSG test sites. The reason given by the police to council, was to prevent the violence, civic disruption and lawlessness that prevailed at the Glenugle protest site south of Grafton in 2013.

However, the Council granted permission and the residents of Fairbairns Roads bore brunt of a blockade that required around the clock security and police presence to allow them to come and go.

In fact the police were having to escort parents and their children to the school bus during the protests, such was the level of intimidation. Ultimately, the results of AGL's exhaustive and comprehensive scientific tests on the sites were that there was no contamination of underground water. NSW Government has since granted AGL permission to proceed with the extraction of the gas, which the state of NSW sorely needs.

Mr Premier, this issue reminds me of when I first came to Gloucester in the late sixties. A similar action by a minority group, destroyed the viable, legal and responsible timber industry, which employed many people, including fourth generation foresters. In that campaign the silent majority's views were trampled on by the publicity given to an irresponsible group who continually broke the law and interrupted people going about their work in legitimate businesses. Eventually, the courts and the politicians by their vacillation and inaction, allowed the protesters to prevail.

Interestingly, to my knowledge, the farmers and graziers who are likely to be affected by the extraction of CSG, have willingly had gas line T-pieces on their land for years in preparation for the gas to flow east. Again, I understand that there has

been no coercion on them in making their decision.

One would hope that a responsible Council, far from actively discouraging growth and employment, would see it engaged in attracting other industry. For some years now population growth and therefore business activity have stagnated. The Council have given no thought or support to those people who have invested their hard earned money in businesses that have suffered for years, yet pay substantial amounts of the community's rates. Little consideration has been given by Mayor Rosenblum and his Council to their anxiety, stress, probable depression and hardship caused by its bias in favour of the disruptive activities of the anti-CSG group of people.

As is common knowledge, Gloucester Council is one of the poorest performing councils in NSW. Basic essential services to the community have declined to a point where it can't even repair roads, mow parks and community environs in a timely manner. It has forgotten what its main responsibilities are to the community at large and whilst it might appear to be gratuitous advice, it needs to refocus on what should be its real priorities

Mr Premier, there is an alternative forward thinking 'big picture' group of people in our community called 'Advance Gloucester'. They are a voice of reason and seek to inform and unite Gloucester citizens with the facts around the science and all of the issues in the debate. I implore the NSW Government to stand strong with this group and the silent majority and reject Gloucester Councils request regarding the revocation of AGL's CSG licence.

Yours sincerely

John Herd
Gloucester

Dear Editor

The following is an article from The Tye 29 April 2011, it makes very interesting reading when compared to the letter in your November 2015 edition from Lawrie Ayres concerning CSG in Alberta Canada. Whilst I don't claim to be any sort of an expert on the matter, this

article does seem to be somewhat at odds to the claims Mr. Ayres makes.

John Knight
Cooperbrook

Rosebud Alberta Canada.

Beginning nearly a decade ago, the natural gas industry carpet-bombed some of the Alberta's best agricultural land with 10,000 shallow CBM wells. It also fracked everything underneath. No company disclosed what toxic chemicals they actually deployed to break open these shallow coal seams. And no regulator recorded the original state of the groundwater either.

And then along come Ernst, a 54-year-old scientist and oil patch consultant. Before the boom she lived on top of an unfractured coal seam on a quiet piece of fescue (*a type of grass - Ed*) just north of Calgary in a town called Rosebud. Clean and nonflammable water flowed through coal formations that fed her water well and that of her neighbours. Historical water records confirm it.

But during the boom things changed. The region's geological formations got blasted so many times by highly pressurised injections of nitrogen, water, sand and toxic chemicals that methane started to seep up all over the place. Even Ernst's dogs stopped drinking the water. Today the landowner can now set her tap water on fire. In fact, she now trucks in fresh water to avoid inconvenient kitchen explosions while making dinner. Nor is she alone.

Being stubborn and somewhat testy about justice and the fate of public resources such as groundwater, Ernst decided to sue. She just doesn't think energy security should trump water security.

Her \$30-million lawsuit penned by well-known Toronto lawyers (and that means Ernst is damn serious) is an eye popper as well as reality check on the costs of pursuing extreme sources of energy.

In fact, her well-documented case is considered by some to be so credible that Ernst has been invited "to present her story and make recommendations to governments at the 19th session

of the Commission on Sustainable Development at the United Nations in New York” next week.

Both shale gas and CBM, the harnessing of blue flame slaves for urban markets, are in many ways energy’s new heart of darkness. As the Ernst lawsuit shows, their production tools can be just as ugly, negligent and brutal as 19th-century slave traders in the Congo. (The men who shackled blacks for New World plantations were also creating jobs and satisfying the world’s demand for more energy.)

The lawsuit

For the record, the 79-page document alleges that EnCana, an energy trader as big as King Leopold, broke nearly a dozen laws — an accusation that, it should be noted, remains unproven in court.

The suit says EnCana conducted “a risky and experimental drilling program” that contaminated a local aquifer with toxic chemicals. Given that “the fracturing process can connect to other fractures or can extend beyond the coalbed and into bodies of groundwater.”

But companies have now done that right across the continent. Ask rural citizens from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania to Pavillion, Wyoming and many will tell you that hydraulic fracking is an extreme example of unrestrained greed.

The whole process takes more wells, more heavy machinery, more energy, more compressor stations, more land fragmentation, more water and more captured regulators than conventional natural gas.

But that’s ho-hum part of the claim. The interesting bit comes next. The document alleges that so-called energy regulators watched EnCana contaminate an aquifer but “failed to follow the investigation and

enforcement processes that they had established and publicized.”

Moreover, says the suit, the regulators charged with protecting groundwater in Alberta treated “the legitimate concerns of citizens regarding resource development with contempt and hostility.”

At one point, Alberta’s Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) even banished Ernst from its offices. It flat out refused to discuss compressor noise pollution or water contamination with the landowner. (Imagine if natural gas companies banished customers with furnace problems!)

The regulator also accused the oil patch consultant, a scientist who works with facts and thinks regulators should be concerned about facts too, of “attempting to humiliate the organization” by asking questions about the board’s reluctance to investigate groundwater contamination.

The Goliath-sized regulator, which employs approximately 800 people and spends \$170 million a year overseeing hundreds of thousands of oil and gas wells, finally dispatched one of its legal eagles to the scene.

According to the lawsuit, the man threatened Ernst: if the pesky landowner didn’t shut up about her flaming water, “don’t expect us to help you.” But she kept on talking and the regulator, well, kept its promise. Shortly afterwards, Alberta Environment found 50 pollutants in local water wells that matched fracked wells.

The lawsuit says that the Alberta Research Council belatedly did a study but it was “inadequate,” used “factually incorrect data” and made conclusions not supported by the facts. And on it goes.

So there is an extreme price to be paid for energy obesity especially when that energy comes from extreme sources requiring extreme practices supported by extreme regulators.

And that price is being mostly borne by the citizens of rural North America. Meanwhile urban consumers burn their blue flames with the same sort of thoughtlessness as a small person in a big car on a little errand.

Given the damning contents of the claim, every barbecue fancier and city homeowner using natural gas should read it. In fact, home gas bills should probably come with an unrestrained message: “WARNING: Urban consumption of natural gas from fracked zones sacrifices water supplies in rural neighbourhoods.”

Dear Editor,

As the owner of a photography business in Taree I find it disappointing that the manager of the shopping centre where I am a tenant has given the Santa photos set up to an out of town company. We had a good old fashioned hand shake agreement that this would never happen while I am a tenant, so I now believe their actions to be totally unethical. I spoke to the manager after receiving an email (email?!!!) from someone in Sydney saying our services were no longer needed. It was short notice and we clear our entire December calendar for that job. I told him as much and said that as a tenant, and small business, his decision would be devastating to us. He said the decision was already made. I asked why he didn’t talk to me about it so I could try to make it work for both of us, but he had no answer. I’m really gutted because only a month before this, he had given me his word that we would always have that gig (when trying

to sign me up for another 5 year lease). I’m so disappointed that all that money is now going out of town. As well as the staff that I put on normally, those jobs now don’t exist. I have also since found out that they were advertising the position before I’d even been told. So a big blow and not even the courtesy to tell me with enough notice to try to fill the gaps we’re left with. It is disillusioning that a handshake agreement is considered worthless and that what seems sheer greed has usurped an award winning local business.

I will continue to support local businesses in the centre, however the management of this centre is a huge let down to our area. I thought hard about publicly voicing my concerns, however if decisions continue to be made this way it will be at the detriment of our community.

Linda Byrant
The Photography Hub



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Have a wonderful festive season!

Editor

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