

The Manning Community News

OCTOBER

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

THOUGHTS FROM THE BUTCHER'S SHOP



Tinonee butcher Craig Shepherd

The local butcher can be a place to catch up on news as well as choose something nice for dinner.

Craig Shepherd, who runs the Tinonee Family Butcher, can also give you some cooking tips, provide a ready-to-cook meal, and a few tips on how the economy is travelling.

Craig was living on a farm in Windsor but five years ago he and his partner Allison decided to make the move to the Manning.

'I started out with a mobile business. I'd go to a property, kill the animal, hang it in my portable cool room then go back with my truck that was kitted out as a full butcher shop and butcher the meat on site. It was a great idea, still is, but the roads were so bad that I had to give it away. In one month I had \$3,800 worth of damage to my refrigerated truck due to the local road conditions.'

So when the Tinonee shop became available he and Allison decided to

give it a go and after fourteen months they have made quite a name for themselves.

'I know meat, I've grown up on farms and we run cattle and pigs on our property at Dean's Creek. My dad helps with the property and my thirteen year old son helps him as he helped me with the mobile butcher as well. My other two sons are younger so not sure what they might do.'

Craig points out that if they want to be a butcher they'll need capital.

THE RISING COST OF MEAT

'The cost of meat has sky rocketed because of the export market. I've got a regular body of beef hanging in the back that cost \$1,500 before it was butchered and there's a lot of waste. A whole lamb before butchering will cost about \$160 to \$180 each. In China a body of Wagyu beef would cost around \$19,000!'

At the mention of the Chinese export trade, Craig's cheerful face turns grim.

'My old boss said the day we pay over a dollar a kilo for lamb, we're done. I'm paying round \$7.80 a kilo to get it into the shop whole. Australia has become nothing but a food farm for China and we're getting nothing back. They've got it sewn up and soon won't need us and where will we be then? They've got here their own ports, big cattle properties, abattoirs, half a dozen of our best dairy farms, and now they've apparently got people like Gerry Harvey and Gina Rinehart building plants to manufacture their milk powder. All for China's growing, cashed up population. These foreign companies pay little if any tax, and nothing stays in Australia. If this TPP goes through they'll be bringing in their own workers. I don't understand why the government allows it. Why not lease the land to them? No one is joining all the dots.'

While Canberra might not agree with his sentiments, you can't disagree over meat with Craig. He is dedicated to delivering the best quality meat he can find.

'If cattle are going down in weight or are stressed, the meat will be tough. I go down to the sale yards at Townhead Sunday nights when the cattle come in and I watch them for a couple of hours and I can pick the good ones to buy Monday morning. I sell my free range pigs at the same time.'

Craig loves to cook and has value added by offering ready-to-go meals and has installed a smoker to produce his own small goods.

'We buy buffalo from a property in Lakes Way and I'm planning to sell their cheese when I have approval.'

He also provides some of the meat for one of our favourite TV cooking shows.

AWARD WINNING APPRENTICE

Craig is ably assisted by Amy Anderson who just won the State Apprentice of the Year. Amy, from Burrell Creek, is a 33 year old mother of two, and does all the breakdown of the carcasses and the prep work.

'It's a fantastic career for a girl. We have a farm and I love the paddock to plate thing watching my meat go through the whole process. As a butcher I work smarter not harder, as lifting those heavy sides of beef can be an effort. So I butcher what I can in the cool room then take it in pieces into the shop. I could do meat inspection, work in retail or wholesale. And Craig is great to work with!'

Craig offers a final piece of free advice.

'I'm a farmer as well as a retailer. I know farmers take a hit when prices dip, I run cattle too. I bought cattle when they were cheap but by the time it was time to sell them I bought a bull instead and started breeding. But if we don't start looking after ourselves locally and nationally, we'll be done. You can't eat coal and gas.'

WE KNOW WHERE ... BUT WHO? WHEN?

Melissa Callinan from the Tinonee General Store came across this photo taken outside the shop. She wonders if you know anyone in the happy group!



Tinonee Store in the good old days.

WAKE UP CALL



There's been a change to the regulations for burning off on your property.

Contact your local Rural Fire Brigade and make an appointment with one of their local Fire Permit Officers who will inspect what you plan to burn and where, then issue a permit for the next 14 days only. Time frame might change depending on weather conditions.

Maybe a few too many were telling porkies about what they planned to burn so now the officers check first.

ONE VOICE CAN BECOME MANY

Occasionally there comes a point in life when you have to stand up and say 'Enough is enough.'

For Manning local Jennifer Schoelpple it was October 2013.

'I'll never forget that morning. The tipping point for me was when the Abbott government gave the green light for the AGL pilot wells at Gloucester. That final approval to frack the wells was like a death knell. I remember almost vomiting I was so sick, I just didn't think they'd approve it. It was a pivotal moment which said to me and others, "Let's change the rules and laws so we - the government - can do what we want." I was so shocked. It was one of those moments in life you can't believe it was happening. I had always opposed the wells especially the issue of disposal of contaminated flow back water,' said Jennifer.

Jennifer has a home in the Manning near Charity Creek but works in Sydney as a piano teacher. She is a single mum and her daughter Mathilde, nearly 14, goes to school in Sydney. They stay with Jennifer's father during the week but she and Mathilde are always anxious to come back home to the Manning.

Jennifer explained how that one event set her on a course that has changed her life.

BECOMING INVOLVED

'The next day after the fracking announcement I put up a bit of a rant on Facebook and Dayne Pratzky (the anti-fracking activist known as The Frackman) said to me, "So why don't you do something about it" in that male kind of way. So I thought he's right. No point in bellyaching on Facebook. But what could I do?.'

And there comes the point a lot of us reach, where we say in frustration, but what can I do? Jennifer is quick to point out, we can do a lot, one by one, and together.

'I thought I'm in Sydney and AGL headquarters is not far away. Why don't I go and speak to them, though at that stage I wasn't very good at public speaking or marshalling all the facts. I put out the word to see if anyone

would come with me and a young girl and four adults turned up the next morning. If it had been better organised we'd have never got in to see the AGL executives let alone let it be filmed! There was a man from the Wilderness Society who had a video camera and he filmed 25 minutes of us talking to John Ross, the AGL hydrologist. On the tape he made so many assertions that were totally outrageous like - there's more salt in rainfall than there is the produced water - he obviously thought he could pull the wool over our eyes. He was clearly used to trying to bluff people and obviously dismissed us as country bumpkins.'

The video went up on UTube with devastating effect for AGL, and while more people joined Jennifer no one has ever got through the AGL portals or door-stopped any executives since a housewife and single mum stubbornly sat in their reception politely asking to speak to someone about the future of their water and the planet.

Jennifer walked away from that meeting and decided to set up a protest outside AGL HQ in Sydney which has continued ever since. Her campaign was picked up by the Get Up advocacy group with her quote -

"I am absolutely furious that you people (AGL) are trying to do this to a small community... if I can't see my little girl swimming in that river being safe ... you will never hear the end of it. I will stop you, I don't care if it takes me my whole life."

Jennifer agrees there is generally a disproportionate number of women at CSG protests and on picket lines whether in or out of the home, as women can see that this industry is attacking the core elements their children need to survive.

'If an industry is arrogant enough to attempt that, they can expect to have the battle lines drawn with women from all walks of life. Women see the blinding obvious - no it won't and can't work for many reasons - the long term effect on the ground, water and health of our children for starters.'

AGL "SPIN DOCTOR"

Six months later Jennifer and a group had a meeting with the upstream manager of Gloucester AGL Gas and spent a day trailing around with him asking hard questions.

'But talk about a Yankee spin doctor! Eventually I got so upset I started yelling at him in tears,' she said. 'This is when I warned him - he would regret he ever set eyes on me!'

Jennifer feels she leads something of a double life, driving up and down to Sydney where she teaches piano under her professional name to students at Trinity Grammar. When Mathilde is not in school at PLC Croydon where she has a trumpet scholarship, she supports her mother's activism.

'Occasionally she gets a bit embarrassed when I appear on the TV news or something,' laughs Jennifer. 'My Dad comes out to some of the protest gatherings and my late mother was first to sign my original petition where I had 15 thousand pen and ink signatures on paper petitions signed from around the state though most came from the mid north coast area... which I presented to Dr David Gillespie at Port Macquarie airport as he was heading to Canberra. He did formally lodge the petition in parliament and mum said she thought this gas fracking and oil and gas extraction were the biggest threat to the planet since technology took over.'

WHAT FRACKING DOES

Jennifer is deeply concerned about the salt as well as "well creep".

'When you have two thousand tons of contaminated salt that has no home to go to, and there are a planned 330 wells which could blow out to 600 or more wells as we've seen in the USA just imagine what will happen in the small Gloucester Valley with all those wells being fracked! Chemicals are forced into the wells under pressure and opens up the avenues for contaminants that are meant to stay down a kilometre underground, but start leeching up as it becomes a dynamic situation with all of the forces pushing super toxic chemicals into the coal seam which is not meant to withstand this sort of pressure day after day.' She shakes her head in frustration. 'Surely the people working there know this. It seems to me people are being paid not to speak out, not that I can prove that. I hate to point it out, but look at the former ministers and officials who are now in the employ of extraction companies. Not hard to join the dots is it? And it's accepted. And because it continues and goes on we're being played for a bunch of bunnies. And the problem is, not enough people take the threat seriously enough to actually go and do something concrete enough about it. People can sign on line petitions until the cows come home but

the companies will just wait until the dust settles and then they'll do what they intended to do in the first place. The only time anything really happens is when there's people action. People who are prepared to go out to the site and lock themselves onto a machine or join the knitting nanas or take photos of the chemicals and bubbling foul water in once pristine waterways and put it on Facebook and send it to the media and action groups. That's what makes the difference. That's when the company starts taking notice, especially when brand damage kicks in.

'The other big problem is country versus city. City people have no bloody idea what's really happening. The majority want energy and they don't care where it comes from. I have students who know far more what's going on than their parents do. It doesn't help either when the State government placates the city by stopping planned drilling in city 'backyards' because there's more votes there than at Gloucester. City people might take an interest when they discover that their food and milk is coming from fodder and ground contaminated with toxic chemicals. It will take until we have an epidemic of kids' health problems as a result of contaminated food or milk. And they're not testing properly for them either.'

ALL THIS, AND HOME LIFE TOO

For those who show how much they care, like Jennifer, it takes time and energy plus a toll on both the personal and working life.

'We shouldn't have this inflicted on us, we should be able to live safely. These companies are taking away our rights to live normally and have healthy food, clean water and fresh air. In reality they're undermining our basic human rights and pretending it's not happening. Politicians and corporations want their bottom line to look good, and have no interest beyond the profit margin. Perhaps they don't understand or plan to get out before it collapses, but it is a pyramid scheme, those at the top get filthy rich and the costs are passed on to the community lower down. It's a net loss industry as it costs more to get the gas out of the ground financially and in energy than they're going to get back.'

SO HOW DOES SHE COPE?

'What I'm doing on my 120 acre farm is making myself completely self sustained. I am completely off the grid and have tanks holding 300 thousand litres of water, gravity feed, composting, a septic system, worm farms plus my own produce and chickens in case it all goes pear shaped. And if it does, all I need is one tank of fuel - to drive Mathilde and myself home from Sydney.'



Single mum protester, Jennifer Schoelpple

TAKE A LEAF FROM BEAUTIFUL BERLIN

My husband and I have just returned from a nine day walk through Bavarian Germany, covering over 200km on the German leg of the ancient pilgrimage route to Santiago known as the Camino.

What struck us both about Berlin was the German aesthetic and appreciation of nature. Berlin is one of Europe's greenest cities with thousands of large shade trees, covering streets, carparks and backyards, all of them numbered and individually cared for by the city government. In addition to hundreds of parks and forests throughout the city, these extensive greenways largely account for the clear and fresh air quality, as well as the intrinsic beauty of the city. The green roof helps mediate hot summers and contributes to the high quality of life in this trendy city.

This aesthetic continues to 'wildflowers' otherwise known as weeds. Wildflowers in Berlin are allowed to grow on median strips, along railway lines, and along paths. They are not poisoned or mown but rather left to provide seeds and shelter for birds and insects, adding to the city's biodiversity. To the unaccustomed eye this 'messiness' is actually an ecological enhancement.

Berliners are keen gardeners and home to the original guerrilla gardening movement. The old US airstrip of

Tempelhof – famous for the post-WWII airlift – is now a huge park for skateboarding and cycling, with the grassed surrounds overtaken by pop-up gardens for the inner city dwellers. Makeshift raised garden beds, outdoor furniture and even a stage for performing music and poetry are all made from reclaimed wood pallets.

A deckchair in the sun outside a Bierhaus, with a beer or glass of wine in hand is a splendid way to spend a summer afternoon. For those living further out in the suburbs, there is a long tradition of renting a small plot of land in communities of gardens, for growing food and flowers and sleeping out over the weekend in the equivalent of a grownup's cubby house. There is a distinct absence of legislation attempting to control this creative endeavour, and the peaceful coexistence of gardeners and leisure-makers.

Famous for its commitment to renewable energy, solar panels cover roofs everywhere: homes, barns and industrial buildings. Even in the remotest villages of Bavaria, solar panels are ubiquitous and wind farms grace the skylines. Larger scale solar farms crowd all unused spaces along the autobahn and among industrial estates. Germany has announced its commitment to eliminating nuclear power after the Fukushima accident and has long left behind fossil fuel



A community garden where locals, socialise, garden, sit in the sun or sleep over

powered plants, cementing its place as one of the world's most progressive, and successful, economies.

Berlin has a beautiful culture where the most common shop is the florist and commuters read books, where people are fit and walk or cycle as much as they can. On periodic Sundays the autobahn through Berlin is closed to traffic so cyclists can enjoy the thoroughfare to ride into the city. Thousands of people cycle on a lovely day out: families, the elderly, musicians riding and playing, all decked with flowers and enjoying the sun. People come out of their houses

to play tambourines and wave to the passing entourage.

These are some of the hidden treasures of Berlin: this über trendy centre of the European music scene is also intimately linked to nature and its economy and social policies reflect that. Our communities could take a leaf from Berlin's book.

And it's a great place for a holiday.

Di Rayson

Wingham

SPRING GARDENING

Spring bulbs provide a lovely display in spring. A moderate application of complete organic fertiliser and regular watering in dry weather will help them perform at their best. Once flowering has finished, allow foliage to remain on the plants until it has completely died back. As foliage yellows it is drawing nutrients from the leaves into the bulbs to provide energy for next year's growth. Cutting foliage too soon will only weaken the bulbs.

To keep tomato plants healthy, a deep watering once or twice (in hot, dry weather) a week is better than a daily late watering. As flowers start to form on tomato plants, a light application of a complete organic fertiliser will ensure good cropping.

Just a reminder that it is a legal requirement to remove galls from citrus trees by the end of August. Gall wasps larvae weaken trees. Adult wasps emerge from the galls in September or October and, as gall wasps are poor flyers, they prefer to lay their eggs in new shoots on the same tree. If you haven't already done so, check citrus trees (especially

grapefruit and lemons) now and prune off any galls. Galls are swellings in a section of main stems or fruit stalks. Old galls are dotted with tiny holes where previous wasps have emerged. Burn prunings or dispose of them in a sealed plastic bag.

The following gardening advice for October 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 Full Moon phase: [from all day on 1st to all day on 4th October]. In frost-free areas, Jerusalem artichoke, carrot, potato and radish can be sown directly into beds, and banana passionfruit, passionfruit and tropical guava can be planted. Asparagus seed, beetroot, sweet potato and chives can be sown in a cold frame.

After frost, avocado, blueberry, citrus, cherry guava, macadamia, olive, marjoram, oregano, sage, rosemary, French tarragon, thyme and evergreen trees, shrubs and vines can also be planted.

During Last Quarter phase: [No sowing between 5th and 12th October.] 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 14th to 6:30 pm on 20th and from all day on 22nd to 10:am on 27th]. Bush and climbing beans, suitable Chinese cabbage, grain crops, rocket, NZ spinach, tatsoi, sunflower and sweet corn can be sown directly into beds, as well as a green manure crop of clover, buckwheat, millet, Japanese millet, pigeon pea, soybean – or sorghum late in October.

Cabbage, capsicum, celery, cucumber, eggplant, leek, lettuce, pumpkin, rockmelon, rosella, silver beet, spring onions, summer squash, tomato, watermelon, zucchini, basil, dill,



parsley and flowering annuals can be sown or planted out.

Full Moon phase: [from 10:00 am on 28th to all day on 31st]. During Full Moon phase, asparagus seed, banana passionfruit, beetroot, carrot, Jerusalem artichoke, passionfruit, pawpaw, potato, radish, sweet potato, chives and lawn seed can be sown directly into beds. Avocado, blueberry, citrus, tropical and cherry guava, macadamia, mango, pawpaw, marjoram, oregano, sage, rosemary, French tarragon, thyme and evergreen trees, shrubs, herbaceous perennials and vines can be planted, and turf laid.

Lightly fertilise young citrus, divide chives and day lilies, and re-pot pot plants.

Lyn Bagnall

THREE FAMILIES SHARE – A HOME AMONG THE GUM TREES

On peaceful Mitchell's Island a successful experiment in retirement living is showing a new way for baby boomers to reinvent their post working lives.

It's an experiment that has attracted attention around Australia and overseas where similar shared homes have established a new way to enjoy retirement living - and save money.

Three couples - Heather and Rick Bolstler, Daniel and Eve Weinstein and Judy and Michael Hollingworth - were all friends of long standing in Sydney. All were working professional people, children had left home and the couples had taken holidays together over the years.

But as they entered their fifties and began contemplating retirement none of them wanted to lose their companionship or their interesting and fulfilling lives. And having seen what was on offer, even in up market retirement villages, and not wanted to go there, they began to discuss alternatives.

And as Australia faces a boom in retiring baby boomers, these couples were not prepared to settle for the accepted retirement lifestyle of their parents or their contemporaries.

PROVEN FRIENDSHIPS

The friendship between them had provided support during family crises, health problems, bereavement, raising children, and professional decisions. And in an offhand remark when one of them commented that it would be nice if this sort of support, friendship and lifestyle could carry on in to retirement, an idea was born.

While all recognising sharing their retirement years mightn't be an easy thing to achieve, as it would be challenging but they considered worth giving it a try.

There were many long and frank discussions. Even though they knew each other well, living under one roof would alter the dynamics and threw up endless practical questions.

There were still all working, so they decided to test the concept by renting a big house in Sydney and tested shared living on a trial basis for two years.

'People our age are generally housebroken by their 60s so we clean up after ourselves and tend to be neat,' said Daniel. 'But we sat down and talked through practical things like finances as well as what really matters to us as you need to have common values.'

The more they explored other co-housing concepts and examples around the world they came to the conclusion it would not only be a supportive thing to do but they'd save money by sharing the expenses of one household. So the search for property began.

FINDING THE RIGHT PLACE

'We'd taken a lot of holidays together down the South Coast but decided living there would be too cold, so we looked north,' said Judy. 'We had a mutual friend who lived on Mitchell's Island and we'd all visited her individually at certain times and so we started looking around the mid north coast.'

They looked at properties that had been sub divided for age diverse communities as they realised how important the need for support from a community was and how valuable it was to integrate people of all ages into a cohesive community group.

'We've come out of an age of generations of nuclear families who didn't know anything else,' said Daniel. 'We could see the sense in what we were doing, but other people

became so interested as it seemed an unusual thing to do. But we'd thought about it so long and planned it so well it didn't seem an odd thing to do. We wanted to be healthy, live in the country, save money and as we knew no one, we took our friends with us!'

'It was tricky to race up from Sydney on weekends and look at real estate, but then we fell upon this piece of property - four acres and a wonderful setting overlooking Browns Creek,' said Eve. 'We decided if things didn't work out we could on sell the property as we got it for a good price. We didn't want a large holding as we were never going to be primary producers.'

'We started coming up on weekends to clear the land but then we began to fall in love with it and started planting native trees and planning the landscaping,' added Judy.

'But as we were still working we needed someone to drive the project and Heather and her husband took on that role. We had a large shed erected as living quarters with a couple of bedrooms sectioned off so other couples could come and stay at weekends.' (Heather wrote a book about the experience called "The Shedders.")

THE RIGHT ARCHITECT

They selected local architect, John Basden from Nabiac who initially found the brief rather challenging as the block faced east west rather than north south and each couple required their own privacy of a bedroom, bathroom, study and a deck each with communal shared spaces.

Said John, 'Most people have been building homes the way they buy cars - to fit everything at holiday time - and then for 48 weeks of the year it's too big. Three homes like that would cost a fortune, so The Shedders' place

is only the size of one and a half 'normal sized homes'.

But the resulting home is cleverly designed with clean flowing lines and practical aspects taken into consideration such as wide corridors should one of the occupants ever be in a wheelchair. Each deck has its own private outlook to the farmland, the water, and the woods which surround the property. Many retirees are looking to downsize, and John Basden advises, 'By going smaller it frees up the options to get the correct orientation of the house for thermal comfort throughout the year. If you don't need to fill the whole block to fit the 'wishlist', the small floorplan can be positioned to open sideways to the yard and garden, for example.

'Paying to heat or cool a building where you don't actually have to, is pointless. The fireplace or air conditioning should be an occasionally used luxury, not something you need to make a bad building habitable.'

These couples enjoy living in the peace of the country yet still in quick access of the hospital, shops and a good cappuccino.

SETTLING IN

The group are now all well settled and carving new lives and interests, but the move from Sydney was an evolving process.

'I took a year off to nurse my sister through a terminal illness and then decided we hadn't saved enough to retire so I worked another year as CEO of an environmental standards organisation,' said Judy.

'There was a bit of a bumpy patch initially,' said Eve. 'We'd changed our direction in life and therefore our identity changed and we didn't have the same support group of family and friends that we'd had in Sydney. It was an organic process that happened in stages. We all had to go through the process of breaking the ice in the local community and meeting people through our various interests.'

The men still have on going businesses where they consult from Mitchell Island. 'Though it would be helpful if we had decent internet,' said Michael resignedly.

'After moving I found I needed a double hip replacement,' said slim and fit Eve. 'After my rehab in Sydney I came back up here and set up my yoga studio in the old shed, which also serves now as extra guest accommodation.'

Eve, who ran a yoga studio in Sydney, holds regular classes in the spacious shed and Judy, who met



Heather and Rick Bolstler, Daniel and Eve Weinstein and Judy and Michael Hollingworth

Eve when she began training as a yoga teacher in 1979, is a regular in the classes along with local neighbours and students seeking a senior yoga teacher.

THE REALITIES OF AGEING

Judy, after experiencing the wonderful help from palliative care workers looking after her sister, is now a registered palliative care volunteer and has started a campaign to raise awareness and to create a support group to meet the growing need for palliative care services for Manning Valley residents.

And while the group feel they have settled well into the Manning Valley community they have also adjusted and settled calmly and happily to sharing a home together.

‘We have good communication, we can talk openly if we don’t see eye to eye over something. We’ve learned negotiating skills and are honest and we have a set of agreements which was really unspoken, such as not letting things fester. Or someone will raise something with another person about what might be bothering someone who seems out of sorts. We all respect each other and know each other well. We look out for each other, we enjoy each other’s company, but we’re not in each others pockets unless we want to be. We all travel and sometimes there can just be one couple here for weeks at a time,’ said Eve.

Added Judy, ‘We have a bit of a weekly roster, who wants to cook when, and that includes the men, and we all clean the house together every Friday morning!’

POSSIBILITIES FOR THE MANNING

They all agree the Manning could be promoted as the ideal modern retirement location given some imaginative and innovative thinking and promotion.

‘I’d like to see Council provide more opportunities for volunteers to participate. We all know the Council is broke, so why not supervise volunteer programs? We’ve seen some brilliant volunteer run projects work in other areas which are highly professional, take some of the weight off council yet are fully volunteer run,’ said Daniel. ‘Retirement is a growth area here so that opens opportunities for volunteers to get

involved who are bored or don’t want to do the same leisure thing every week. I’d like to see Council offer internships to give kids work experience for example.’

These are motivated, energetic professionals, who are enjoying life and making the most of this stage of their lives in a place they feel is still a well kept secret.

‘We had a big party at the hall on Mitchell’s Island for Eve’s 70th birthday,’ said Daniel. ‘And our families and friends came up along with our new friends and people began to see that what we’ve achieved with our lives is pretty darn special. It’s given a lot of people food for thought about taking control of your destiny.’

The baby boomer generation were always ones to defy convention and make new rules. City folk from professionals to hippies who moved to places like Nimbin in the Northern Rivers and lived in communes, also broke the rules of conventional architecture as well as lifestyle.

But one thing remains unchallenged - the need for community. Neighbours living in isolation, old people dying alone undiscovered, children not having friends down the road or down a track, are no longer acceptable. MacMansions have had their day. Community means feeling part of a family, looking out for each other; becoming part of the Manning family.



The house designed by Nabitac architect John Basden

COLLECTIBLES



Rex Nicholl

“Invest for the future by buying the past.”

Wow! You can be lucky when you go out hunting for interesting items from the past.

On a Sunday in September I had the pleasure of a 5.00am departure for Sydney. A friend, Frank & I travelled down to attend Wentworth Park Antique & Collectable Fair. This fair is held on the first Sunday of each month.

At 7.45am we were on the doorstep chaffing at the bit. They let early birds (super keen collectors) in an hour before the general public. Early birds 8.am \$10, General public 9.00 \$4

Frank & I were off, looking for a bargain. We headed in different

directions to cover more area as there are over 100 collector stalls.

My buys were a 1930’s Royal Copenhagen figure, two small smoking pipes in the shape of shoes, two pieces of opalescent uranium glass dishes, two small sterling silver dishes, an unusual railway pocket watch holder for a sleeping carriage, a Murano glass bell – Laticino, 1930’s Wade English pig money box, an unusual green depression glass vase and a piece of signed iridescent art glass.

Frank’s main buy was a bronze Japanese, mid 1800’s, Meji period, large vase with beautifully sculptured moths around the lid. Frank paid \$300. Great buy!

But, but, but I bought a ceramic 14inch jug with a dragon lizard forming a handle. I really liked the

styling, the quality and the subject matter. I was showing Jenny, my wife, my treasures the next day and noticed a faint inscribed mark on the base.

After some research, I discovered it was Royal Worcester, 1860’s, one of England’s finest porcelain makers.

Sometimes you have a win!

I am constantly doing appraisals for antiques. If you need help –

Ring Rex - 0427880546. Or pop into Olympia Antiques opposite Taree train station. Wed-Sat 9am-4pm.



THE COLOURING CRAZE

Is it art? Is it science? Is it therapy? A fad? Or perhaps spiritual escape from bad news, or a digital detox?

Well, for a start it's just simple fun. Colouring for adults is a publishing phenomenon, with hundreds of books now available, many on the best seller lists for months.

It began in earnest in 2013, with Scottish designer, Johanna Basford's book "The Secret Garden: An Inky Treasure Hunt and Colouring Book". She now has several books out, including "The Enchanted Forest" and her small British publishers, Laurence King, are planning more. Her books are fabulously popular, selling millions.

An avalanche of other colouring books have now hit the stores as well - all over the world. Apparently, in France colouring books have been selling faster than cook books and in Brazil, figures



from May show colouring books made up nearly 20% of all book sales and there were 9 of these on the top 20 best seller list. All aimed at adults.

People who love them use words like relaxing, delightful, satisfying, calming, a private pleasure, a chance to unplug. Just play. Zone out.

Doctors suggest colouring for people who are recovering from illnesses, and are very popular for those suffering with Alzheimers. They help healing, are relaxing, as well as pass the time. Batches have been sent into prisons. Entrepreneurs, business people, adult men and women with kids all buy them. The act of colouring in beautiful intricate patterns, or landscapes, or animals, or abstract designs, has found a place, and all you need is one of the books, and some good quality art pencils.

The internet is full of articles about what it all means, and there's plenty of debate.

The ABC's "Books and Arts" program had a look at the phenomenon recently, and interviewed neuropsychologist and neuroscientist, Dr. Stan Rodski who says there is science behind it. He had patients who simply could not manage relaxation techniques - too overcome by stress to meditate for example. He gave them

colouring to do, and says measuring brain waves and heart rhythms showed significant calming effects. He has now designed his own colouring books for adults, and says he prefers patterns, lines and shapes to defined pictures because the key elements are repetition, pattern, and detail.

Some professional Art Therapists are wary and say it's not therapy because there is no "therapeutic relationship" with trained professionals. Having said that, Art Therapist, and lecturer at the University of Queensland, Claire Edwards, has helped produce a colouring book specially for transplant parents who can become very stressed. It's called "Breathing To A New Technicolour Dream Book", and was developed as a community art project.

Are these books art for people who can't do art? Do they appeal to people who prefer order, and precision? Who cares! Millions love them and say it's restful and fun and you can make something beautiful in your own time, at home. People frame or laminate them. They are available locally, an array of books of gorgeous fine patterns, landscapes, animals, beautiful and delicate designs... pretty much wherever your intuition takes you.



If you need inspiration, there's a Facebook site for adult colouring in, where you can see some amazing finished images.

We have all heard of Mindfulness, even tried it. There's also meditation, or jogging....Colouring books offer easy, repetitive pretty or dramatic work, allowing the mind to settle in a gentle peace, away from the worries in our lives. It's a chance to turn off the computer, hide the mouse, put the smart phone on silent - and quietly colour in.

Well, in a digital world, it couldn't last. There are now free Apps for colouring in, and clever little programs that enable you to do it on the bus, or the ferry, or on the beach.

Try the local newsagent or anywhere selling books - there are lots of the books on display. A page of butterflies in a forest is a happy dream as a first go.

KM

We love Matt's recipes, they're easy and different. And while he's the cravated sophisticate dispensing kind advice on Masterchef, he also seems a bloke who loves cooking for his family, telling funny stories and who licks the cream off the beater or his sticky fingers!

MATT PRESTON'S SLOW ROASTED LAMB - THEN AND NOW

The heady smell of oregano always takes me back to a summer I once spent in the Cyclades.

I had paid a peppercorn rent for a small hut in an olive grove. It had a lock and an old metal bed and not much more. We washed from the large cistern at one end, our nights lit only by the moon, and when we cooked, we cooked over a small fireplace on old olivewood that spat and hissed.

The grove sat a little way back from the beach, up in the hills above the little village. There were only three ways into the village. By boat, by foot, or, if you were posh, you could take a donkey along the stony goat track that wound 8 km from the only road on the island and along the course of a dry riverbed lined with large bushes of wild oregano past my hut.

Back then, Vathi was a simple place of two tavernas, a blue-domed, white-washed church and a handful of houses perched on a rocky bay that was a perfect protected anchorage. It was quiet until mid-morning, when the tiny, ancient ferry from the ugly port belched its way into the bay carrying ice and chattering Scandinavian backpackers.

Early in the evening the smell of lamb cooking over coals, doused with wild oregano, would snake across the beach carried on wispy fingers of smoke - each local taverna competing for the custom of the backpackers who had stayed

to bathe in those last rays, or for the yachties rolling into the bay enjoying the sunset. It was the most persuasive of all adverts.

Each night we'd share a plate, my blonde Norwegian and I, in one tavern or the other. The achingly slow-cooked and tan-crust meat always fell apart in strands like a fraying rope, each piece laced with fresh lemon and another big fresh handful of oregano. The herb was everywhere: on the salad of soft local goat's cheese with fat tomatoes and black olives, and thrown like a green blizzard over the chunks of cooled cucumber that came with the inevitable ouzo.

It was always a long dinner, the meat punctuated with endless backgammon and broken Greek; by laughter and music, always music. Careening, whirling tunes of love, loss and goat prices played on a cracked-cased old bouzouki by a man with a face as brown and scrunched as a walnut.

Sometimes we danced, close or wild, and then later, in the dark, we'd walk home up the dry river bed, lips and fingers sticky with lamb fat, brushing against those wild oregano bushes, so we'd arrive home with our clothes and bodies richly perfumed by the herb.

500 g Greek yoghurt

1 cup chopped oregano, plus another couple of branches for dressing



2 lemons
50 g ground coriander
2 garlic cloves
1.5 kg boned, butterflied lamb shoulder (ask your butcher to peel off the tough outer bark to reveal the milky fat beneath)
100 ml olive oil
80 ml white wine vinegar
salt flakes
8 ripe tomatoes, cut into chunks
1 large red onion, finely diced
1 cup pitted black olives
100 g feta, crumbled
2 cucumbers, skin on, kept in the coldest part of the fridge
250 ml (1 cup) ouzo, plus more to drink

Blitz the yoghurt with the oregano, the zest and juice of one of the lemons, the ground coriander and the garlic. Slather the marinade on the lamb shoulder then cover and leave it to marinate in the fridge overnight or up to 24 hours.

Preheat your oven so it's really hot. 200°C should do it.

Remove the lamb from the marinade, but leave on any oregano paste that is clinging to it. Place the lamb on a metal rack over a roasting pan, drizzle on half

the olive oil and pop it in the oven. Blast with heat for 30 minutes.

Add 180 ml water and the vinegar to the pan. Now turn the oven down to 150°C and leave the lamb alone for 3-4 hours. If it needs a little crisping up on the outside you can grill the top for 5-10 minutes.

When the meat is cooked, and by cooked I mean crusty on the outside and falling apart in the middle, pull it out and leave it to rest for at least 15 minutes covered in a sheet of foil, with some old copies of newspaper on top, to retain the heat.

To serve, place the lamb on a large wooden board and shred the meat from the shoulder so it falls in shards across the board. Season with salt flakes. Now sprinkle the lamb with the tomato chunks (complete with seeds), red onion, black olives and more oregano leaves. Squeeze over the juice of the second lemon, scatter over the feta, and drizzle on the rest of the oil.

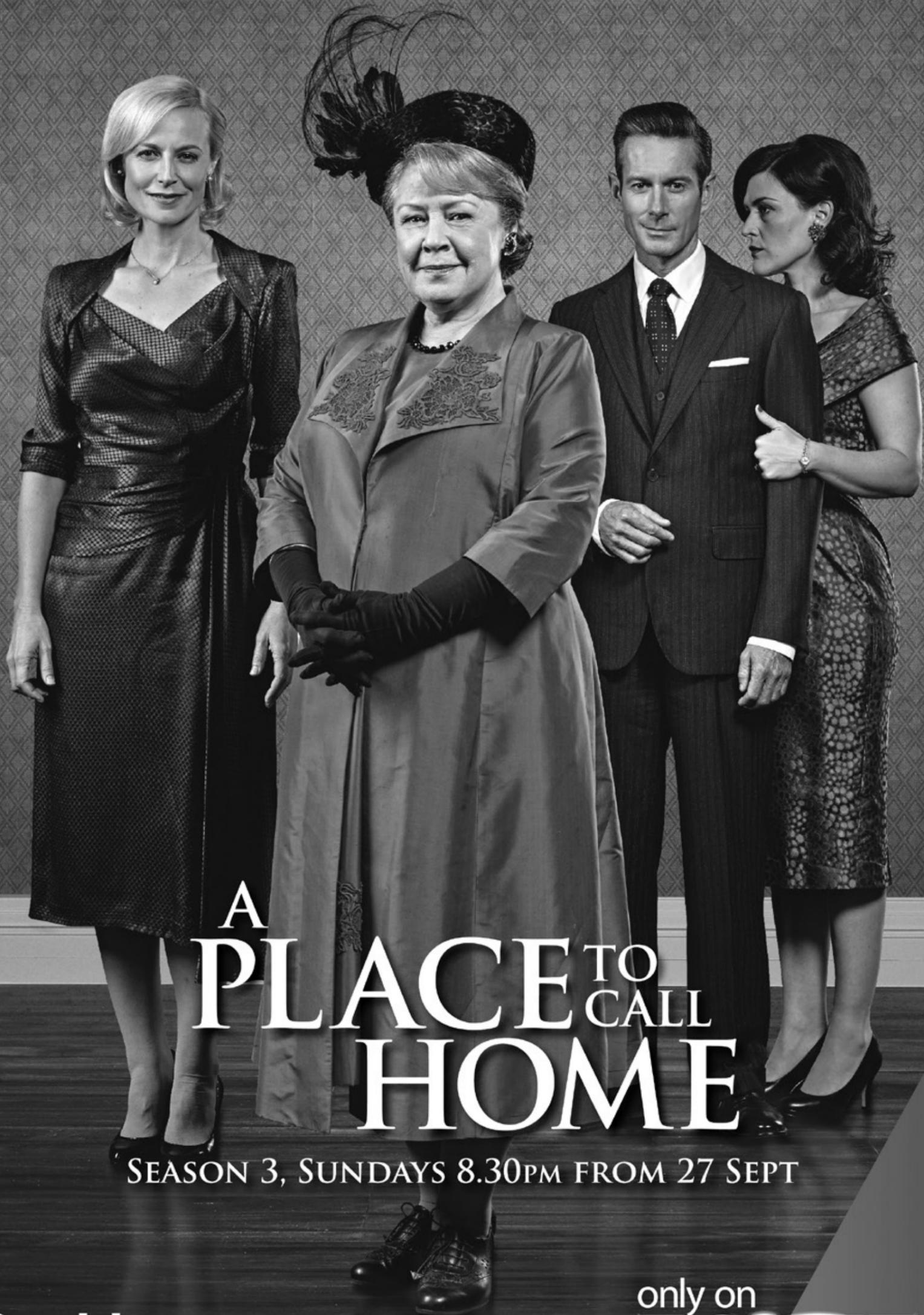
Place on the table along with the cucumber (freshly cut into batons straight from the fridge) dunked into four small glasses of ouzo. Share. Dance. Live.

SERVES 8

From: Matt Preston Cook Book - 187 Recipes to make you incredibly popular! Published by Pan Macmillan.



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YOUR SAY . . .

COUNCIL HAS NO MONEY !!!

As our Greater Taree City Council is constantly telling we Ratepayers that they have no money to carry out certain jobs, why then is it necessary to continually employ so many engineers and staff in Council chambers to oversee all these jobs that can't be done due to the lack of money.

This then means no money, no jobs therefore no staff required!

One solution to this problem would be to start and trim the staff tree from the top down!

Charlie Sumner

Harrington

LET'S BE GAS FIELD FREE

Farmers and residents all over NSW are uniting to declare their streets, suburbs and farmlands as Gas-field free. Driving the movement are their shared interests in the economic activities of their neighbourhoods, extrinsically linked to the health of both their families and the land and the flow on effect to ground water supplies and property values.

Concerned residents have united into neighbourhood zones forming Gasfield Free groups, meeting to discuss the implications of coal seam gas exploration. The groups enable surrounding residents to make informed decisions, and boost community consultation.

The CSG exploration project at Gloucester has prompted door knocking in our region to inform residents, with approximately 70,000 people relying on water sources located downstream from Gloucester, including the Manning Valley.

Predominantly, the responses from residents is to support long term sustainable activities which strengthen the community and protect our assets. As reflected in previous issues of this publication, locals deeply value the area's natural beauty, historical significance and potential for tourism to raise the profile of our area. We have fertile farmlands and a flourishing trade

in producing high quality and niche produce as well as a revival in farmers markets in the region and consumers searching for fresh produce outside of chain stores.

The future of these endeavours as well as the popularity of the Manning Valley as a tourist destination is uncertain if our groundwater and rivers are polluted and damaged by exploration activities. We need to ask ourselves what activities are worth supporting that are best for our region for both short and long term benefits? What will support our community's 'heart and soul' as referred to in May's edition of The Manning Community News.

We choose to live and work here, and by allowing local businesses to thrive in an environment conducive to viable economic outcomes, we can provide jobs for generations to come without the need for our young people to move away. Let us be able to choose jobs that reflect what we love about the Manning Valley.

We need more people to be engaged in the gas-field free movement to safeguard the Manning Valley for all to enjoy for decades to come. The beginning point is to join your local neighbourhood group enabling you to make informed decisions that support our region's future. Email midnorthcoastgfc@gmail.com or Phone 042 1176 152 to link up with your neighbourhood group.

Aspen Charlesworth

Elands

Dear Editor

I loved your whole page excerpt The Creatives In Our Community Are Necessary.

The excerpt from Joanna Murray-Smiths speech was truly inspiring in its plea to recognise the sacred place of the arts and artists in our country.

Thank you very much

Maggie Young

Wingham

Dear Editor

What a great read your paper is.

Had the pleasure of picking up my first copy of your paper on Sunday from the corner store in Harrington

Loved the story on Ann Rowsell, her husband Syd was the brother of my Uncle, Joe Rowsell who married my father's (Archie Budden) sister, May and I can remember many fun times with the Budden's and the Rowsell's growing up in Wingham.

Also have an affinity with the article on the Mondrook hall and school as my mum Lorna Budden (nee Sawyer) and her sibling Valerie, Allan and Marie all went to school at Mondrook.

I remember fondly dad telling the story every time we drove down to pops farm (Bill Sawyer) at Mondrook how he and his best mate Alf Avery had to ride their tandem bike from Wingham after dad finished work at Micky Simmons butcher shop to the farm to pick up mum and Aunty Val and then



1990 Student reunion at Mondrook School



Mum Lorna Budden (nee Sawyer) at Mondrook Hall



My Dad, Archie, at work at Micky Simmons Butcher Shop, Wingham, now an antique store. As you walk down Isabella St you can see the tiles with Bulls heads under the windows that was common in butcher shops of the 40s and 50s.

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