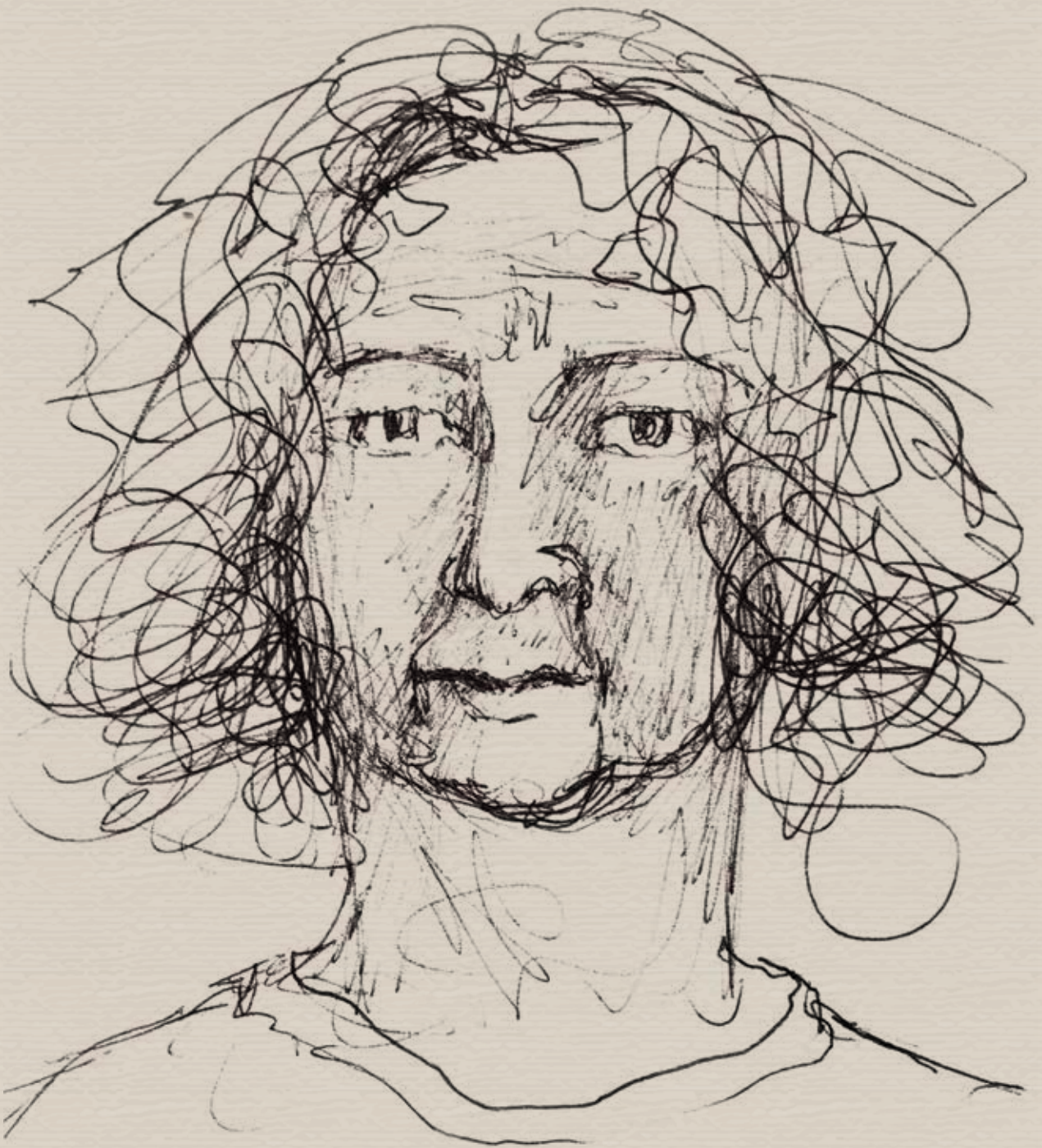


ISSUE #16

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White Wash

MILTON ULLADULLA LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE



After The Fire

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Editor's Note

This summer was one that our community, and Australia as a whole, will never forget. The Currowan fire has changed us forever. Lives were lost, homes were destroyed, and forest and wildlife were razed. The sheer scale of devastation was overwhelming and triggered an intense period of flooding emotions—*anxiety, shock, sadness and heartbreak.*

In the aftermath, we moved from hugging and shedding tears in the street; to sitting, talking and sharing stories together; to planning how best to support and help each other to recover, rebuild and put our lives back together.

When we spoke to Monica Mudge in the last issue, Treading Lightly Inc. had just been formed. We could never have known that just a few months later, this disaster would see the fledgling organisation swing into action, providing a well-coordinated effort of practical assistance on the ground and sprinkling love and support wherever needed.

Words cannot express the respect and gratitude we have for the RFS volunteers, not just from our towns, but also from far-flung ends of the country and overseas who served with such courage and commitment during the crisis.

Then there were the local community organisations manning evacuation and recovery centres; people opening their homes to strangers and feeding families on the side of the road; volunteers caring for native animals; boats delivering food and supplies to cut-off communities; neighbours assisting each other to fight fires; friends and small businesses organising fundraisers—the kindnesses were prodigious.

When it came time to get back to work on this issue it was difficult to know where to begin. One thing we were sure of was that we wanted to focus on the positivity of this amazing community and how people are pulling together and looking to the future. Having

heard so many inspirational stories, we didn't know which to choose ... who to highlight and who to single out?

So we decided to touch base with some of the people who we'd featured in previous issues of WW and see what their experiences and perspectives of the disaster were and what they had learned. From there, more stories flowed and our feature took shape.

One story that we heard consistently was that of the Ute Brigade and we'd like to thank guest contributor, Heather Stewart, for sharing her personal account of the fires at Croobyar and the part played by these local heroes.

We've also run some of our regular pieces—Two Way Street features brother and sister Jade and Marc Andrews and our Local Talent is Rebecca Summers from Business Chicks.

Finally, a special thank you to artist Penny Lovelock for approving use of her artwork, *After The Fire*, for our cover. Penny was featured in Issue #8 and sketched this self-portrait in her pocketbook a couple of days after she lost her home at Conjola during the fires. We felt her face perfectly captures the raw emotion of the trauma while her straightforward gaze looks to the future with strength. When we last spoke, Penny was cheered that her garden was already regenerating kangaroo paw after the rain.

So, welcome to this special issue of White Wash. We hope the stories, as well as the recent rain, help to lift your spirits. There's no denying there's a long way to go, but it's heartening to see the way we are drawing strength from each other as we take action at a community level. In terms of the bigger picture, we hope that this summer's events are a catalyst for serious change. *w*


Virginia & Terri


COVER ARTWORK 'AFTER THE FIRE' BY PENNY LOVELOCK


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Autumn Issue #16–March 2020

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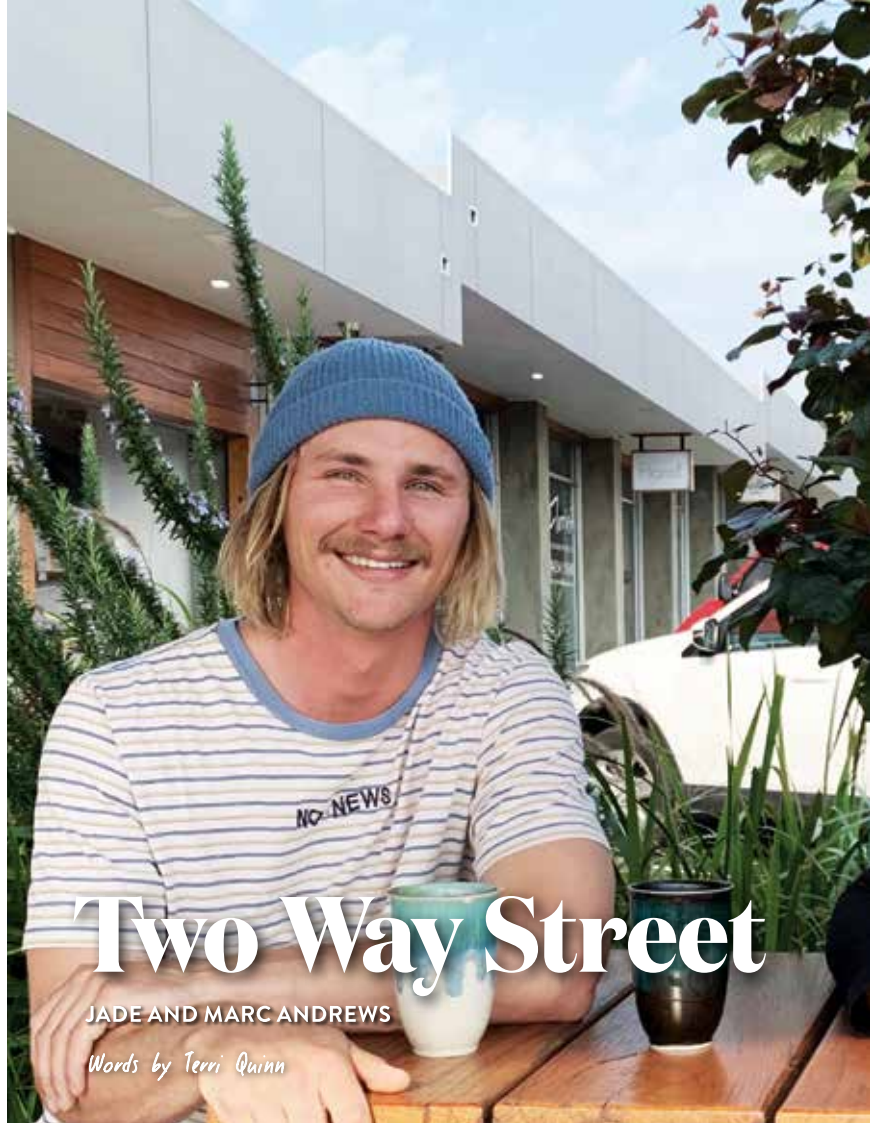
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Two Way Street

JADE AND MARC ANDREWS

Words by Terri Quinn

Educator, Jade Andrews was a self-confessed social butterfly at high school while her younger brother Marc, a musician, was driven to achieve. But post-school experiences have taught them important lessons about life, family and the transformative power of education.

Jade and Marc grew up at Burrill Lake, with older brother Dean, in a home filled with love and music. Their father, Gary, played the guitar and was always up for a sing-along. “Both the boys picked up the guitar but it never stuck for me,” says Jade. “When dad tried to teach me, it lasted for the length of ‘Smoke on the Water’ and that was it!”

At St Mary’s primary school in Milton, the siblings thrived in the small-school environment and shone in leadership roles. Jade believes that being school captain set her up with the public speaking skills that she utilises today and Marc acknowledges drumming lessons as being pivotal to his interest in music.

As they progressed to Ulladulla High School, Jade’s focus was more around friends, touch football games and lunchtime laughter. She chose subjects based almost purely on her social life. “There were some good grades, some quite ordinary grades and minimal effort,” she admits. “My life as an average student was enjoyable, but my aspirations were quite low.”

In contrast, Marc was inspired to do well academically. “Funnily enough I didn’t take music as an elective at high school,” he says. “I thought I should do hard subjects like physics because they would get me better marks for entry to university.”

Marc continued to practice and play guitar and Jade has vivid memories of him performing in front of a large audience at Exposure, a performing arts night at the school. “Mum and I were sitting there feeling nervous for him ... but he came out and smashed it! From then on he was never without a guitar in his hand.”

By Year 11, Jade was cruising into her senior years without a clear plan for the future. “I had completely wiped the prospect of going to university. I believed it was only for the smart kids, the ATAR* kids.”

After completing her HSC in 2009 Jade was working at AKWA surf shop in Milton when she received a call from a neighbour who worked at IMB in Ulladulla. The bank was offering a traineeship and the neighbour thought Jade was the perfect candidate. Jade quickly pulled a resume together, attended an interview



and within weeks she was inducted as a trainee.

"I loved the job, the people and the environment. Every day I was learning new skills and knowledge, while also studying for a Certificate IV in Business and Finance," says Jade. "I was highly motivated and growing more confident each day." Months later, Jade was awarded IMB Trainee of the Year, and less than two years later, at the age of 20, she was in an Assistant Manager role.

“ I had completely wiped the prospect of going to university. I believed it was only for the smart kids, the ATAR* kids.”

Meanwhile, Marc's HSC results saw him accepted into law at the University of Wollongong (UOW) but a conversation with his mum about his future led to a rethink. "I didn't really have any drive to be a lawyer," says Marc. "Mum knew I was more of a creative soul and turns out, she was spot on."

Sadly in 2011 life was turned upside down when Jade and Marc's adored mum, Mary, was diagnosed with cancer. After she passed away, less than a year later, Marc felt he needed to pursue his creative passions and enrolled in film school. He also began composing original guitar pieces. "Making my own music was a different direction and I found it so much more rewarding," he says.

Jade needed time to regather emotionally so she and her partner Mike headed to South East Asia for six months. While there, the idea of a career change began to take shape. Social work and teaching were of interest but both required a university degree. She needed to leap

into higher education, but as the first in her family to do so, she was unsure where to start or even if it was possible.

It was important to stay local so she decided to give the Batemans Bay campus of UOW a call. "When the person on the other end of the phone asked for my ATAR, I crumbled. I thought it would be the end of the conversation ... but they offered me a different pathway and I was soon enrolled in a Bachelor of Arts."

"University for me was a chance to redefine my non-ATAR status and with quite a lot of self-pressure and determination, that's what I did." When Jade graduated in 2016, with a High Distinction average, one of her lecturers suggested she apply for a role that was opening up at the campus. In January 2017 Jade commenced work as Regional Career Consultant. She also manages the Outreach program engaging with over 2000 students a year in South Coast schools to support their educational aspirations.

After completing his Advanced Diploma of Australian Media, Marc headed off on the first of many overseas trips. The excitement and challenges of travel sharpened his understanding of his place in the world and also provided inspiration for his music.

By 2018, he had written ten songs and decided to ask friend Mitch Fa'oa to sing them. As West Wind, the duo released the songs to positive feedback from family and friends and a live gig at Cupitt's saw them well received by a wider local audience.

The addition of locals Mark Beasley and Zack Lucas has seen the band performing their blend of live instrumentation and electronica at a range of South Coast venues. Last year Marc achieved a personal goal when his song 'River' was played on the radio and in January the band dropped their first EP *Sundown* to positive reviews.

Jade has long admired Marc's talent and commitment to his music. And Marc credits Jade with inspiring him to become a high school music teacher. "Music makes Marc happy," says Jade. "Studying online will enable him to further his education while providing the flexibility to pursue his passion."

"When mum passed away Jade just naturally took over and looked after us," says Marc. "She was only two years older than me but she helped with everything. And now she's helping me settle into uni."

Last year, ten years after leaving Ulladulla High, Jade was invited back to address the school community at their presentation night. She took the opportunity to reflect on what's been at the heart of her success and she attributes it to engaging in education ... not only formal education but also the learning opportunities that are available in everyday life.

This brother and sister team has supported each other through grief and celebrated each other's successes. Wherever their paths lead, you can be sure they'll be open to all opportunities for personal growth and commit to them whole-heartedly. **w**

*Australian Tertiary Admission Rank

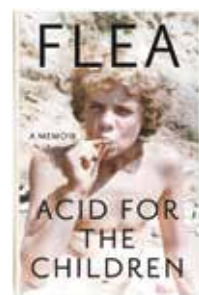
IN THE BOOKSHOP



THE WEEKEND

By Charlotte Wood

Four women have a lifelong friendship of the best kind. But when Sylvie dies, the ground shifts dangerously for the remaining three. Can they survive together without her?



ACID FOR THE CHILDREN

By Flea

Flea of the Red Hot Chili Peppers finally tells his fascinating story, complete with all the dizzying highs and the gutter lows you'd expect from a world-famous rock star.



THE WIFE AND THE WIDOW

By Christian White

Brilliant and beguiling, this mystery/thriller takes you to a cliff edge and asks the question: how well do we really know the people we love? •

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JUST MARRIED

Olivia and Marley were married in October last year at The Old Church. Olivia's family have a farm in Milton so the area is close to their hearts.



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The loving couple left the intimate ceremony space and walked through the rose petals past family and friends.




The glorious garden provided the perfect backdrop for photos of Olivia and her bridesmaids.



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Turia Pitt and Grace McBride created the Spend With Them initiative to help support businesses impacted by the bushfire crisis. Now, more than ever, it's important for us all to shop locally and #spend with them.



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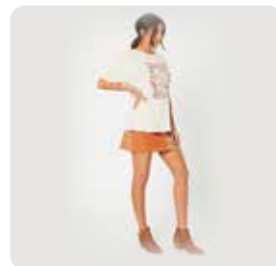
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After The Fire

When lightning ignited a fire in the Currowan forest west of Termeil on the 25th November, few people imagined the chain of events that would unfold. A year of very low rainfall and higher-than-average temperatures had established perfect bushfire conditions.

In the following weeks, record heat and strong winds saw the blaze engulf more than 300,000 hectares of bush and devastate towns and coastal villages across the district. Instead of welcoming visitors to our idyllic seaside summer holiday destination, the community was left grappling with fear and loss while still determined to maintain a sense of care and support for those whose lives were irrevocably changed.

The resilience of this community comes from the strength and courage of individuals. It also springs from the kindness and generosity that has been demonstrated time and again during and since the tragic events. It will take time, but with these characteristics so abundant in our community, it's clear that recovery has already commenced.



WILLINGA PARK

Willinga Park at Bawley Point was featured in Issue #6. The 2000-acre equestrian centre boasts award-winning architecture and world-class competition and conference facilities.

The fire reached Willinga Park on the night of December 2nd. The property's owner, Terry Snow, and his team had long been preparing for such an event. "We'd been clearing fuel on the ground, creating buffer zones and installing our own power and water sources for years," says Terry. "With 650 head of cattle and 120 horses, we weren't going anywhere, so we had to be prepared ... but it was very frightening."

Facing 50-metre flames, the Willinga Park team worked for three days ensuring that the property suffered minimal damage and helping to prevent the fire from impacting on the nearby, local village. Terry also credits the RFS with doing a fantastic job and praises the skill of the helicopter pilots water bombing throughout the drama.

Terry emphasised that the preparedness of the team enhanced their confidence. "Being well-prepared and resourced increases your luck, but the team worked really hard, it was a tremendous effort. Some staff members are with the local RFS, including property manager Chadd Percival, so we had good information as to what was happening and where. We ended up in pretty good shape here."

"A few of our staff also worked on the Milton fires on December 31st and I take my hat off to them," Terry reflects. "We were shattered to hear of what happened elsewhere in the district with people losing everything — so much sadness. It will take a long time to recover."

Terry marvels at the endurance of people when faced with incredible adversity. "There are some really tough individuals around. It's an Australian characteristic borne from past experience of a harsh environment and it will take us into the future too. We are a resilient lot."

Moving forward, the management of our region's parks and forests and the ongoing threat of major fires to wildlife and property are of deep concern to Terry. "I hope that resource allocation to National Parks and Wildlife is given much-needed attention. Increases to funding and improved landcare practices would be a positive outcome of the tragedy."

Since the fires, activities have returned to normal at Willinga Park. "We're getting on with it and looking forward to some rain ... we're not on our own there," Terry concedes. "When the country regenerates and is green again we will really appreciate it."

DEAN DAMPNEY

Photojournalist and Tabourie local, Dean Dampney, was featured in Issue #2 and is a regular contributor to White Wash.

When the fires first encroached on nearby Termeil, Dean recalls feelings of helplessness. "I was surfing great waves with some guys and we were all feeling guilty. We wanted to do something but we had no idea what we could do."

As the fires neared Tabourie, Dean was forced to grapple with conflicting feelings and balancing priorities. "I think men historically are wired to want to do something, take some action. I found myself jumping into that role but not really sure of what action I should be taking."

On two separate occasions during the following weeks, Dean's home was under threat with his family having to evacuate. In hindsight, he has given considerable thought to his response to the crisis and admits to surprising himself with his capacity to confront the dangers presented.

He found it beneficial to focus on preparedness and learning all he could about the science of fires, their characteristics and behaviours. This helped him to consider a range of possible scenarios, and react as best he could.

“ I think we are more open. There is a greater degree of lovingness and regard for each other,”

Thankfully Dean's home was not damaged, however, he is very sensitive to the losses suffered by so many. "There's a lot of trauma but there's also a lot of positive energy around. It's going to take time and the needs of the community are greater than we are able to meet. We will need help."

Dean's concerns around climate change have led him to bring people together within his extended network to facilitate discussion and positive action, including linking interested landowners with the Australian Conservation Foundation.

Working to raise awareness about environmental issues has helped Dean to feel more positive about the future. "I am giving more of myself and getting more in return." He's confident the community's resilience will be increased through learning from the disaster. "I think we are more open. There is a greater degree of lovingness and regard for each other," he says with a hint of pride.

Dean's reflections also focused on the importance of leadership, especially in times of crisis. "We need strong role models. Our children need role models within the family, the community and at a higher level to inspire confidence ... and they want to know what's going on."

Dean has found he learned a lot about himself during these testing times and along with other Tabourie residents, he plans to join the local RFS. ►



THE ANDERSONS

The Andersons are seventh-generation dairy farmers at Wickham Hill, north of Milton, and were featured in Issue #8.

On New Year's Eve, Barney and Janine (Nene) Anderson were camping with family and friends at their 'cabin' beside Narrawallee Inlet. The early morning lakeside setting gave no hint of what was to become the most destructive day of the Currowan fire.

Barney left the campsite to check his cows and realised immediately that the increasing temperatures and wind were likely to cause problems. He called Nene and said, "I think you'd better start packing up. We need to be prepared." Within an hour he was on the phone again while watching black clouds of smoke as big as thunderheads north of their property. "I think Conjola is on fire ..."

Just after midday the strong north-westerly winds caused the fire to traverse the highway north of Little Forest and sent flames rampaging across Wickham Hill's drought-parched paddocks to Barney's parents' home and the dairy itself. Fires had also started burning in their paddocks at Croobyar and on the neighbouring dairy owned by Robert Miller.

“Our boys, relatives and neighbours were all here and people turned up who I didn't even know.”

With fires erupting in several places at once, resources were beyond stretched. "It was the perfect storm," says Barney. "But we were so lucky. Our boys, relatives and neighbours were all here and people turned up who I didn't even know."

Barney was impressed with the community spirit he observed during the crisis. "It was like 20 or 30 years ago when we all pitched in and helped each other bringing in silage or whatever. Then we all got too busy. But when the shit hit the fan, everyone was there to help. The guys with the water pods on utes really saved the day," he adds, marvelling at the relatively low levels of damage sustained to the property.

Nene is tired but very grateful. "I've never been so happy to be cleaning up the mess and vacuuming my floor when I think of those people who have lost everything," she says. "We've been lucky but it's very stressful. The cows have to be milked twice a day, fires or no fires. In a way that keeps things normal."

Barney shrugs at Nene's concerns. "We'll fix the fences and keep going. It's a couple of weeks' extra work that we didn't need but you do what you've gotta do ... and our boys have really stepped up," he says proudly.

TURIA PITT

Author, athlete and motivational speaker Turia Pitt was our cover story in Issue #5.

When the smoke from fires obscured the skies of Mollymook it was difficult for Turia to remain calm. Having been injured in a bushfire in 2011, the impact of the sight and smell of thick smoke was visceral and she fought hard not to panic.

"I really had to focus on not letting my emotions and own experiences get the better of me," says Turia. "I was having recurring nightmares and it was difficult to sleep, eat or think. I just wanted to tap out and pretend nothing was going on." In the late stages of her second pregnancy, Turia was tired and emotionally spent but she was determined to "keep a lid on things."

When it came time to return to work, Turia and her marketing manager Grace McBride, struggled to focus after all that had happened. Worried about small business owners who had been hard hit with the loss of summer trade, they thought about ways to help. "Grace came up with the idea to feature local businesses on Instagram," says Turia. "We were really inspired by the Buy From The Bush campaign and thought we could do something similar to help fire-impacted towns."

They created an Instagram page called @spendwiththem encouraging people to spend online. It was an overwhelming success with the page attracting 10,000 followers in the first hour. Almost immediately Grace was fielding calls from Today and The Project and within two days they had over 170,000 followers.

The pair was swamped with messages of thanks and stories of much-needed sales. "Profits were donated to the RFS, wildlife funds and other organisations. Locals were employed to pack and ship orders, businesses were saved and lives changed," says Turia proudly.

The initiative also helped Turia to manage her own emotions and anxiety. "It helped me shift my perspective and focus on what I could actually do to help."

She is also enormously proud of her hometown, "I didn't think it was possible but I have even more gratitude for this community. I've seen the way we've shown up for each other, listened to each other's stories, supported each other and been endlessly empathetic and generous."

As we go to press, Turia and her partner Michael have just welcomed their second child Rahiti. We congratulate them on the arrival of their precious son.



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“The world has been watching this and everyone will be interested in how we recover. We mustn't forget what has happened here. It's an opportunity for change.”

NOEL BUTLER

Noel and Trish Butler's commitment to raising awareness of the value of our native flora was featured in Issue #13.

On Saturday the 4th January *Nura Gunyu*—their home, garden and learning centre—was destroyed in a firestorm that obliterated hundreds of acres of the surrounding Woodburn Forest. A few of the established native trees will regenerate. However, thousands of plants disintegrated in the blaze leaving those animals that survived with neither shelter nor food.

Despite the shock of seeing their paradise devastated, Trish and Noel immediately started to recreate a haven for the birds and animals, purchasing plants the same day they first saw the blackened remains of their home. “Planting some shrubs was comforting, it gave us a focus,” says Trish. “Feeding the animals and giving back to the earth is what we need to do to help nature recover. My goal is to have 1000 plants in by mid-March,” adds Noel.



As an educator, Noel sees this catastrophe as an opportunity for people and whole communities to learn more about native flora and sustainable land care practices. “This event has impacted everyone. It's not just a rural issue anymore. People from the cities were also affected. The world has been watching this and everyone will be interested in how we recover. We mustn't forget what has happened here. It's an opportunity for change.”

Noel and Trish have received donations and help from within our community, across the nation and internationally. They are very grateful. “People really do care about the environment and humans are community orientated. We need to encourage people in affected areas not to give up and to advocate for changes to government spending on land care and community initiatives. People can take control and help regenerate the environment with thoughtful planting and improved planning,” says Noel.

Noel is passionate about learning from the catastrophe and sharing that knowledge to assist other communities to remediate environmental damage. “Forget about blame, let's get on with it. We cannot wait for the government to fix this. We all live here and as a strong community, we can help each other and other communities. We don't need permission to give back to the land—it's our life. I want people to come back here in spring, and then again twelve months later and be inspired by what we've achieved,” says Noel confidently. **W**



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Credit: Joe Schrederis @schredlife

Ute Brigade

Words by Heather Stewart

A few of the Ute Brigade working to save St Mary's. L to R: Joel Schrederis, Nick Pollard, Aaron Owers and Nick Evans.

Of the many stories that have unfolded during the summer bushfires, the story of the Ute Brigade was one that I felt needed to be told. From Bawley in the south, Brooman to the west and Bendalong to the north, the Ute Brigade was on hand to assist their neighbours and the wider community.

Also referred to as The Mosquitoes (because they buzzed around everywhere) they would appear at crucial times, with water-filled palicon cubes on the back of their utes, to help extinguish the flames. With their local knowledge of the terrain and the mobility to access areas that were off-limits to larger, heavier trucks they stepped in where needed.

The Rural Fire Service did an amazing job but because of the sheer scale of the fires, they were stretched to the limit. Local builder, Chris Hayward, believes the contribution of the Ute Brigade was invaluable. "These guys have been protecting their own homes, friends homes and strangers homes for over a month now. Without them, I would hate to know how many more losses in homes and lives there would have been."

I had my own experience with the Ute Brigade on the evening of the 4th January, when the Pyrocumulonimbus cloud began tracking towards my home on Croobyar Road. The call had gone out that ours was the next community to come under attack and my husband and I were so grateful when several utes descended upon our area.

Fireballs rained down from the cloud and a number of trees exploded

into flames 300 metres from our home. Gale force winds roared with deafening noise. The world turned red but night-dark at the same time and thick, black smoke obscured vision. Embers swirled and landed ahead of the flames. Fire licked at eaves, set alight a garage and torched trees, shrubs, fences and gardens.

“These guys just dig in when something needs doing. It doesn't matter who needs help, they don't discriminate.”

A 'Hisway' water truck was on hand to refill the 1000 litre water cubes after the Ute Brigade had emptied their supply on the flames. Maintaining radio contact at all times they battled the spreading fire and the numerous spot fires. Soles on boots were burnt off. Lungs filled with smoke. Many worked through the night and into the early hours.

"My son has spent his holidays working tirelessly, but he wouldn't have it any other way," said a mum of one of the boys. "These guys just dig in when something needs doing. It doesn't matter who needs help, they don't discriminate."

I believe people need to acknowledge and celebrate what the Ute Brigade did for our community. There were so many involved we can't mention all their names, but we residents at Croobyar greatly appreciate their efforts and recognise that they saved not only our properties but also St Mary's school and many other homes in our district. [w](#)



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HAPPY SNAPS

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Amanda and Heidi chose Narrawallee Beach Reserve for their long-awaited wedding day.



Lucas Alderman was excited to meet his heroes from Bondi Rescue who were visiting town after the fires.



Gemma Graham and Ollie the Collie, sharing the love.



Emily Higgins riding her mare Toffee at Milton Pony Club.



Monica Mudge giving Old Blotchy a hug after the bushfires.



Bobby McDonald helping out in the veggie garden at home in Milton.



Tess Lofts smooching her main squeeze, baby son Banjo.



Turia Pitt and Grace McBride created Spend With Them.



LOCAL RECIPE

RICE PUDDING

From Annie Roberts



Forget the calories in this one, it's the ultimate comfort food after a rough day ... or month!

Ingredients:

- 150g short grain rice
- 500ml full-fat milk
- 500ml thickened cream
- 75g caster sugar
- 50g unsalted butter
- 3 eggs
- Grated rind of half a lemon
- Grated nutmeg

Method

1. Put rice into a saucepan and add the milk and cream. Slowly bring to simmering point, then cook very gently until rice is almost tender. This should take about 10 minutes.
2. Add sugar and butter. Stir until dissolved and melted.
3. Take mixture off heat and cool for 10 minutes. Add the well-beaten eggs and lemon rind and stir in well.
4. Pour into 1L baking dish. Sprinkle grated nutmeg on top and place in moderate oven or 30-40 minutes.
5. Serve with jam, cream, fruit or whatever you wish! [W](#)

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Pancake

Words by Brett Burcher

Credit: Guy Williment @guyfunk

It's possible you may know, have heard of or even seen young surfer Luke O'Connell without actually knowing his real name. So allow me to introduce you to the well-spoken, polite young gent more commonly known as 'Pancake'.

Luke earned his nickname as a ten-year-old when his mother, Fernanda, who owned a women's clothing store in Milton, sent him to get some lunch at Pilgrims Cafe. With all intentions to stick to his mum's request for a healthy Pilgrim's Bliss wrap and a green juice, a fateful reach into his back pocket revealed an unexpected \$20 note ... otherwise referred to as a side order of pancakes!

Arriving back at Fernanda's shop to quickly deliver the change, Luke let his additional order slip. "I got pancakes!" he said as he bolted back up the hill to collect the goods. Fernanda was seeing red and hastily phoned Pilgrims to demand they cancel the order but her efforts were too little

too late as Luke was already nursing the goods tightly in his possession.

Once the story hit the streets, the nickname 'Pancake' stuck like maple syrup. And when Pilgrims became Luke's first job as a teenager he was able to continue his pancake fetish without further retribution.

Racecourse Beach real estate is a hotbed for surfing talent and character growth, and that's certainly the case with Luke. Well-known local surfing families—the Bierkes, Macs, Parsons, Brophys and Harveys—all live within a stone's throw of the O'Connell abode, and with ocean-loving parents like David and Fernanda, Luke's fate was sealed in saltwater.

"We live right in the middle of town. There are epic waves straight out the front, it's within walking distance of six quality spots and it's only a quick dash to get to the reefs further south," says Luke. "From a young age, everyone in the neighbourhood just got on and we all pushed each other. Growing up around older influences has been so beneficial for my mindset. I was always trying to keep up, I'm competitive like that."

Rather than just keeping up, he was moulding his own genre of surfing

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Credit: Tim Mooney

style. In an area recognised mainly for polished, turn-based and intense reef-break surfing, Luke's creative and futuristic approach was uncharted territory and it didn't fit with the regular competition format. Early requests for him to adjust his craft heightened his performance doubts. "But I kept being told by people I respected to continue what I was doing, there's a break coming soon." And there was!

Perhaps it was a delayed sugar hit from the pancakes, but Luke's unassuming approach saw him rapidly progress from an overlooked, under-appreciated talent, to someone who is now widely considered to be within the top tier for his age level in the country.

“Growing up around older influences has been so beneficial for my mindset. I was always trying to keep up, I'm competitive like that.”

The minute he felt confident in his approach and began surfing the way he wanted to, the results followed, with him winning the South Coast school regional titles at just 15, against more recognised high profile surfers.

Surfing freely, he took his school-winning formula and applied it to the South Coast regional titles, winning back-to-back competitions as both a 15 and 16-year-old. Following it up with a 5th place at the New South Wales State Titles, 'Pancake' qualified for the Australian Titles, joining the top 32 surfers in his age division in Margaret River, WA.

Nursing a severe knee injury sustained in the lead up to the event, he flew to West Australia carrying more than just his oversize baggage. "I didn't surf my heats the right way and my head wasn't where

it should have been," admits Luke. He bowed out early but with his old man along for the journey, they consoled themselves by riding plenty of waves along the Margaret River coastline that week.

With 2020 signalling his 18th year in existence, Luke is planning to mostly bypass competition surfing to get himself fit, work on other aspects of his surfing and concentrate on his final school assault. "While I'm at school, I'm going to give it my best efforts and see how that progresses. I also want to get all my ocean safety accreditations up to scratch to allow me to do lifeguarding straight after school."

Securing those qualifications opens up the option to mix business with pleasure and become a travelling lifeguard at some of the premier international surf resorts, including Cloudbreak in Fiji, Luke's favourite wave. "Mum thinks I should get into marketing or business, she reckons I can sell anything. I want to experience some travelling first and then see what I'm feeling after that."

'Pancake' currently dedicates two afternoons a week to instructing with Mollymook Beach Surf School who run a weekly program for beginning school-age surfers to help build their confidence in the ocean. "The fact that you see the stoke on everyone's face when they truly feel the beauty of surfing is so refreshing and it's a great way to bring everyone together no matter what their personality and age."

The bushfire disaster over the summer opened Luke's eyes to the grit, determination and love within our community. "I've noticed as a community we have been so supportive of each other. The amount of generosity that this area has given and received is completely mind-blowing." As he completes his schooling and looks to the future, 'Pancake' feels grateful to have grown up here on the South Coast. **W**



CUPITT'S ESTATE

LOCAL PRODUCE



At Cupitt's Estate, we're all about celebrating family, good food, excellent wine and craft beer.

We're proud to be using the best flavours from our pristine South Coast region and making as much of our produce as we can from scratch.

Being able to provide beautiful seasonal dishes on the menu, with produce that has only travelled 100 metres from our kitchen garden, is something we get very excited about.

As the makers of our own cheese, beer and wine, it's wonderful to be able to share information about all of our products directly with visitors, either in the tasting room or on one of our tours.

We're open daily from 10am for morning tea, lunch, wine tasting, tours, cheese platters or just a drink on the lawn. You can also join us for sunset dining from Thursday through to Saturday nights.

Cupitt's love to showcase some of our amazing local musicians. Why not enjoy some of the best South Coast sounds with live music on the lawn every Sunday of the year from 12.30pm, with no bookings required.

With knockout views over the beautiful countryside and only five minutes from Milton and Ulladulla, come and enjoy our special place.

Whether you come to dine on our terrace, explore the gardens with a pale ale in hand, kick back and listen to some tunes, or join us on a tasting tour, we can't wait for you to enjoy the Cupitt's experience. •

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NUTRITIONAL HEALTH

Words by Emily Dennis



BLUEBERRIES AND BLOOD PRESSURE

A review of recent research published in the Journal of Gerontology 2019 Rodriguez et al., 2019 by Emily Dennis, Clinical Nutritionist.

Blueberries contain the potent flavonoid anthocyanin, giving them their incredible health benefits as a potent anti-oxidant and anti-inflammatory food.

Antioxidants protect the cells from damage caused by free radicals, leading to reduced inflammation and support of various body systems including the cardiovascular system.

Recent research published in 2019, looked at the benefits of these flavonoids in blood pressure and the vascular effects being improved flow-mediated dilation and reduction in 24-hour ambulatory systolic (pressure on the arterial wall as the heart contracts) blood pressure.

This improvement in the endothelial function may be one of the mechanisms by which a nutrient-dense wholefoods diet including these foods can help to restore homeostasis and healthy cardiovascular function and reduce disease risk.

The Clyde River Berry Farm is open again after the fires. Why not make a visit and pick some fresh blueberries straight from the tree. •

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Southerly Change

Words by Sean Carson

Last summer, as we slowly adjusted to life under the constant threat of fire, we gained an insight into fire behaviour as we prepared our properties for the next predicted day of 'Catastrophic' fire weather.

Such days saw fire spread rapidly and make a run for the coast while seeming to always be punctuated by a southerly change at the end of the day.

Fire behaviour changes dramatically from a day of light winds and high humidity to a day where a hot, dry mass of air is delivered by westerly winds.

A westerly wind evaporates moisture from the air and lifts the flames from the forest floor high into the canopy of trees. The interior of Australia is where such an air mass normally resides.

A cold front from the Southern Ocean moving north collides with this hot air mass creating a very unstable atmosphere. The chaotic response comes in the form of a strong westerly wind ahead of the change, sucking the desert climate to our coast.

A common occurrence in spring will see the east coast dealing with fire and heat, while cold and snow arrives in the southern states. It is not a 'freak weather event' as sensationalist news wires often refer.

As we move into the summer months, the cool changes are not as cold as those in spring, however

the temperature difference is just as great, given the land reaches extreme temperatures with the summer sun high in the sky.

The southerly change accelerates throughout the day of rising temperatures bringing westerly winds to a peak ahead of the change. The southerly then hits the fire ground causing short-term chaos as it shifts the fire in a different direction and temperatures plunge by 20 degrees.

The cooler temperatures soon restore atmospheric balance and winds begin to ease. Humidity climbs from the new ocean breeze and the flames that signalled 'the end of the world is nigh' are now tamed and return to a slow lick of the forest floor.

As we pick up the pieces and attempt a return to our normal lives after the fire season, we are grateful for the change in weather patterns that has brought the first significant rainfall to our region in over six months.

While the deluge has caused problems in some areas, the good news is that the Currowan fire is now officially extinguished after burning for more than 70 days. [w](#)

Sean Carson is a Mollismook local and works at the Bureau of Meteorology.



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More Than Just A Pub

THE MILTON HOTEL

Credit: CloudFace Commercial Photography

When The Milton Hotel reopened with a shiny new face last December, excited patrons queued around the corner and down the street. Stepping through the doors you could see and feel all the love and hard work that had gone into the project.

This is truly a family operation with long-standing locals, Andrew and Marita Bell, their son-in-law and daughter, Damien and Alice Martin, and their daughter Heidi and her partner, Loris Virgilio bringing their combined expertise to the establishment of your new 'local'.

Damien started brewing beer a few years ago for his wedding to Alice and his passion for making craft beer grew from there. As a professional chef, Damo was initially approached to get involved in the kitchen. But keen to pursue the beer-making side of pub life, he turned the shed out the back into a microbrewery and started brewing!

"We now proudly only pour 'Dangerous Ales' and the occasional guest tap that will always be a craft beer," says manager Heidi Bell.

With a restaurant management background, Loris is front-of-house creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere. He and Damo share a similar vision when it comes to the food, providing a seasonal restaurant menu

with locally sourced ingredients where possible. Yummy pizzas and roasted meats are cooked in the centrally located oven. Enjoy Pasta Monday, Taco Tuesday and a full menu from Wednesday through to Saturday (all from 6pm). Pizzas are available all day Sunday.

Loris has assembled a wine list that reflects both his Italian heritage and Australia's best offerings and he also creates a mean cocktail! Enjoy your drink in the classic main bar, or one of the more intimate spaces, like the wine bar, which showcases the interior design skills of Damien's cousins—Kate Hart (Bare Naked Studios) and Jess Hart (Wild Hart Collective).

The dining area opens onto a timber deck that makes the most of the expansive view to the coast and overlooks the family-friendly beer garden. Regular live music adds to the chilled vibe.

There's also a hole-in-the-wall coffee shop, Sour Bro, with coffee by Left Right & The Bird (also family members) and sourdough bread and treats.

"We are proud to be from this community and to have such incredible support," says Heidi. "The Milton Hotel is more than just a pub—we are trying to shift people's expectations around pub food. We want our customers to try something new and to just enjoy the surroundings, a craft beer and a delicious meal." •

Open Mon to Sat: 12pm-late, Sun: 12pm-10pm

Visit themiltonhotel.com.au for further details and bookings



STORYFEST

STORYFEST RETURNS



StoryFest 2019 was an amazing success with artists and audiences alike setting their sights on StoryFest 2020.

This year's festival will run from Friday June 19 to Sunday June 21, with an extended program featuring more events and more variety.

The program will be launched in April and features some very special guests who will appeal to lovers of fiction, film, history, science, politics and popular culture.

Don't forget to enter the StoryFest Storytelling Competition open to residents of the Shoalhaven. This year's theme is Lost & Found. With categories for primary school students, secondary students, and adults, it's a chance for everyone to flex their writing muscles and be in the running to win cool prizes. [W](#)

For more information, visit the website www.storyfest.org.au or follow on social media

[@storyfestinc](#). To stay in the know, subscribe to the StoryFest newsletter.



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Local Talent

REBECCA SUMMERS

Words by Leonie Marsh

“Everyone at work calls me Sums!” says local Ulladulla resident Rebecca Summers. And by work, she is referring to the global organisation Business Chicks. “Business Chicks is a community for women in business to feel connected and supported.”

Summers is their Senior Events Producer and for the past eight years, she has produced large scale events for some very high-profile guests. And her work name is highly appropriate for when you meet Rebecca she is the personification of Summer—sunny in disposition, in her smile and in her approach to life.

Rebecca moved to the South Coast three years ago with her husband Brad, who has family here (shout out to Aunt Linda and Uncle Karl). Every time the couple visited they thought about relocating permanently and they eventually made the move in late 2017 along with their dog and new baby daughter Harriet. “I was really nervous ... leaving a

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decade in Sydney behind, and being a new mum ...” But she needn’t have worried; Rebecca is thrilled with their new life on the coast and has been relieved to meet so many like-minded people. “Milton Playgroup was a key turning point for me—Harriet and I went every week—we still do! We’ve met some great friends with similar stories to ours. Everyone is so friendly and accepting.”

She also credits Business Chicks for being hugely supportive—Rebecca now works remotely for the company from Milton Work Hub and travels when required. This flexible working cemented the move for the young family. “We love that we have beautiful neighbours, all our kids play in the street and run between houses.”

Rebecca Summers grew up with two elder brothers on property just outside of Noosa and began her career working for her mother’s financial business as a teen. It was this experience of real-life working and learning from the inside that has shaped her prodigious brain. When she finished high school, she headed to Sydney to take on an events internship. “As a young 20-year-old, it was kind of crazy to pack up and leave—I had no money, no job security. I rented a room for four weeks and said yes to every professional opportunity I heard about.”

Rebecca soon landed a position at Global One—her first job in Sydney, in which she was a key part of a team creating 60-70 events a year. It was during this time she met a significant new friend working in the same industry. This friend gave Rebecca the heads up on a new company called Business Chicks. “She encouraged me to apply for a role there, and though I was super nervous, I did.” The 24-year-old Summers got the job and joined the then fledgling team, “It was a significant time to join the company and I thrived off being thrown in the deep end head first.”

Business Chicks is a membership-based community for businesswomen and at the time of print, they will have just celebrated their 14th Anniversary. The company produce over 100 events annually, publish a magazine called *Latte* and facilitate thousands of new connections every week for its members and 250K+ social media following. Summers has produced multi-city tours and large scale events for the likes of Sarah Jessica Parker, Kate Hudson, Nicole Kidman, Dr Brene Brown, Tererai Trent, Dr Jane Goodall, Rosie Battie, Jamie Oliver, Lisa Wilkinson, Sarah Wilson and Turia Pitt. They regularly host audiences of thousands of women who attend to be inspired and motivated by the energy in the room and the insights of the guest speaker. This month they’ll be touring Elizabeth Gilbert with all proceeds from the event going directly to charities supporting the bushfires.

Rebecca’s job is fast-paced, high intensity and hugely rewarding, “I love

creating experiences that make people feel something and hunting down world-class thought leaders to put on our stage.”

As well as one-day events, Business Chicks offer international trips such as a week on Richard Branson’s privately-owned Necker Island and charitable endeavours like their partnership with The Hunger Project (THP). THP is a global not-for-profit committed to the sustainable end of world hunger. It has ongoing programs in Africa, Asia and Latin America, where it implements programs aimed at mobilising rural grassroots communities to achieve sustainable progress in health, education, nutrition and family income. Their mission is to end hunger by 2030.

This April, Summers and 19 other women will embark on their own trip to Ghana for THP, as part of the Business Chicks Immersion and Leadership Program. “This is an opportunity for me to learn, grow, expand my thinking and step up as a leader in partnership with some of the poorest and most marginalized women in the world. I know it will be nothing short of life-changing to learn from the women and men who are leading in their villages.”



I love creating experiences that make people feel something and hunting down world-class thought leaders to put on our stage.”

As part of Rebecca’s journey, she pledged to raise \$10,000 for the charity which she achieved in September of 2019 by creating her very own event—Wholehearted. “I started Wholehearted as a way to give back, not just to raise money for THP but also to create an experience for women that would have an impact on their lives—whether that’s a big shift or one small new idea to implement. I’m fascinated and inspired by human behaviour and how we can curate a life of purpose and meaning.”

Rebecca pulled all her skills and resources together to host 110 women (including your author) for a beautiful day of connection through an impressive line-up of speakers including Chelsea Pottenger (Psychology and Neuroscience coach) and Dixie Crawford (a Barkindji woman from Broken Hill and Brewarrina and Managing Director of Source Nation).

Held in Sydney’s Rosebery, 100% of ticket sales went directly to The Hunger Project and the day gave Rebecca a sense of just how much she can achieve through her own determination, grit and summery spirit. [W](#)

Follow along with her adventure to Ghana via Instagram [@bec_summers](#)
For more information on THP visit [thp.org.au](#). [W. businesschicks.com](#)



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YOUR WELLBEING

Words by Amanda McDonald



A POSITIVE PERSPECTIVE AND GOAL SETTING

To keep yourself positive and uplifted, make time to see the good in every day.

With everything that has been going on, try and focus on all the good around you, especially having family and friends around to share experiences with.

This may involve a chat with a good friend, a laugh with a family member, a walk with your dog, or a splash in the ocean by yourself.

At the end of each day this month, let your mind focus on all the things you're grateful for. Practice changing your mindset, shift towards a positive perspective and feel the difference.

It's also time to set some goals for 2020. Developing new goals for the future is a great way to set a positive tone for the upcoming year.


Perhaps, make health a priority—swimming or bike riding, walking the dog daily, or taking up a new Pilates or yoga class you've always wanted to try.

Once you have your goals set, keep them in the forefront of your mind. Use a diary or post-it notes around the house. Then, break those goals down into smaller goals and think of what steps you need to take to reach them.

The specific habits that you establish and embed in your routine can assist in the maintenance of these goals in the future. •

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The Road To Recovery

Words by Dr Katie Macartney

Last summer, our South Coast community was challenged with some of the largest and most destructive bushfires the state has ever seen. As we rebuild, recover and regenerate, here are some ways we can support each other and the community.

BASICS AND SAFETY

The first step in recovery was to ensure people had their basic needs covered, including food, shelter and water. Many organisations co-ordinated to ensure this happened. The hospital and medical clinics have also worked hard to provide health and medical care as required.

It is imperative that we reassure and educate people that they are safe now. Show children that they have a safe home and people caring for them. Continue to encourage people by pointing out their strengths and their ability to cope.

LISTENING AND TALKING

People heal through talking about their experiences. It helps them to deal and cope with what occurred and ultimately move forward. As a friend, colleague or professional, you just need to listen. There's no need to offer advice or opinions, you just need to show that you are there for them if they need you.

RE-ENGAGING

Daily routines are essential to promote calmness and predictability. Cooking meals, resuming work, going to the gym, playing sports or enjoying music – returning to your usual life activities and re-engaging with the community will help promote recovery.

Limit your family's media exposure. Repeated viewing of news on a disaster can trigger anxiety and distress, especially for children.

MOVING

Daily exercise and movement increases a sense of calmness and control and reduces anxiety. A gentle walk, deep breathing, yoga, or going to the beach—all of these things will improve wellbeing.

LINKING WITH ASSISTANCE

Knowing where to send people who are in need is important. Financial planners can offer advice on where best to access grants or money. Your bank, the Red Cross and Centrelink can all assist with financial packages.

See a GP if your mood is not improving or if your emotional state is interfering with your daily function e.g. at work or home. Free or bulk billed psychology and psychiatry services have been offered to people affected by the fires so speak with your GP to access these supports. [w](#)



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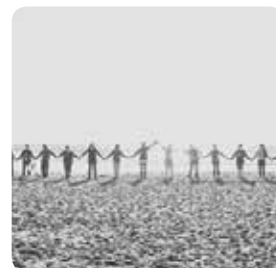




ENVIRONMENT

A COMMUNITY LEAD RESPONSE

Words by Monica Mudge



Credit: Ollie Cool

Treading Lightly Inc. was formed with the intention of bringing like-minded people together to care about the environment and the wellbeing of our community.

We are a not-for-profit organisation that connects the community and cares for our earth through positive action and education.

It has been humbling for TL to serve the community during the recent bushfire crisis. The pace has been frantic but we've responded as best as we can, as often as we can, and to as many as we can—individuals, services, businesses, community—and we will continue to do that.

Thanks to donations we were able to feed frontline crews and displaced people, assist with emergency evacuations, provide medical supplies and purchase equipment for local RFS branches.

Post-crisis, we used funds to assist local small businesses that had suffered loss of trade over the summer holidays and we 'sprinkled love' wherever we felt it was needed. Our volunteers also established wildlife food and water stations.

We are now looking forward to focusing on bush regeneration and continuing our fight for clean oceans and rivers through Take 3 For The Sea, the Bateman's Bay Marine Park and Fight For The Bight. [w](#)

Donate to Treading Lightly Inc. Bushfire Appeal
Acc Name: Treading Lightly Inc.
BSB: 633 000
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Credit: CloudFree Commercial Photography

A Pleasant Surprise

THE RUSE

The Ruse is both a bar and a casual dining venue overlooking the picturesque Ulladulla Harbour. The name is a nod to the fact that behind the venue's unassuming façade lay an elegant interior decor and a view to die for!

The Ruse is the latest venture for Ben and Erin Blair, former owners of the very successful Native café in Ulladulla. The couple brings the same winning formula to their new business—high-quality food and beverages, great staff and a relaxed vibe.

Ben, who is something of a cocktail aficionado, had always dreamed of owning his own cocktail bar. Having worked in bars and restaurants over many years across Sydney and London, he's been immersed in the cocktail industry through domestic and international cocktail competitions, and cocktail training and consulting.

He and two mates had a Wayne's World themed bar on Oxford Street called Whisky Jerx, and with Erin's background in public relations and marketing, they bring business experience along with an enjoyment of working with people.

The menu at The Ruse is inspired by Central American flavours with snacks, share plates, and larger meals that can either be enjoyed alone or with others. Crowd favourites are definitely the tacos and

the delicious churros. The tasty food is complemented by an extensive cocktail, beer and wine list that provides something for everyone.

Bookings for weekends and busy periods are encouraged but Ben and Erin always welcome walk-ins. "We would like The Ruse to be that place that everyone knows you can drop into for a drink after work or a busy day, rather than having to book weeks in advance!"

The Ruse is a great venue for your next special occasion and offers special food and drink packages for larger groups. You can book the whole venue or just one level or area ... perhaps try the secret bar downstairs which has its own special ambience.

On Saturday evening of the Easter long weekend, The Ruse is excited to have local musician, Shaun Wessel, appearing. This will be the start of a regular program of live music at the bar.

Next time you're in Ulladulla pop in for lunch or dinner, for a drink and a snack or just drinks! And when you walk through the doors of The Ruse you'll be pleasantly surprised. •

Menu, opening hours and bookings available via website TheRuse.com.au. Address: 5/84 Princes Highway Ulladulla. [f](#) Facebook [@The Ruse Ulladulla](#), [i](#) Instagram [@the_ruse_](#)

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The Vanns

Words by Jen Quinn

Having served up their long-awaited debut album late in 2019, *Through The Walls* has proven to be a summer favourite for South Coast stalwarts, The Vanns. Guitar heavy, indie rock at its finest, the album is a perfect example of a talent-rich band hitting their stride.

“We’re super happy with how the album has turned out and how it’s been received,” guitarist and backing vocalist, Cam Little, explained from his Orient Point home. Hours later Cam was set to take the stage with ultra-talented friend of the band, Joe Mungovan, for a bushfire benefit

show in Culburra. Aside from his solo work, Joe also features with The Vanns lead singer Jimmy, in blues-infused indie rock duo, El Grande.

Last year was huge for the band. “We had such a great time on tour. The Sydney show at The Metro was a favourite for us, it was a bit of a milestone and definitely the biggest show we’ve put on. We got to play with some amazing bands throughout the year too. Pacific Avenue are great, Lime Cordiale has got such a good live show and they are awesome dudes. Jaguar Jonze opened for us in Melbourne, she is really talented as well.”

Featuring as Triple J Album of the Week, Cam described the writing process for *Through The Walls*. “We would usually write at Jim’s house

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in Kiama, or my house. Otherwise, we would write independently and bring our ideas together. I find it hard to write lyrics while someone is bashing on drums.” Holy Holy guitar genius and now production guru, Oscar Dawson, came on board for production duties after meeting the band for a writing session. “We didn’t get any songs out of it but we got to meet Oscar and we liked the stuff he produced. There wasn’t much debate as to whether or not to get him on board. He’s a cool guy and he pulls good sound. He’s also left-handed like me,” Cam added.

“The Sydney show at The Metro was a favourite for us, it was a bit of a milestone and definitely the biggest show we’ve put on.”

“We recorded in Melbourne at Oscars studio which is the size of a large bedroom. It was a strange set-up—it had a crazy scientist vibe. There were a bunch of other songs that we loved that unfortunately got left off the album, but maybe we’ll put them out on an EP.” During their stint in Melbourne Jimmy, Cam and Oscar bonded over their similar taste in guitar heroes. “He’s a massive Eddie Van Halen guy and Jimmy and I love Stevie Ray Vaughan”. The guitar wizardry bleeds through on the anthemic ‘Deranged’ and ‘How Was I Supposed To Know’, while the stripped back ‘Chelsea’ highlights the band’s diversity and range.

After their successful string of shows in late 2019, The Vanns will be hitting the road again in Spring 2020. “We’re looking forward to visiting places we didn’t get to on the last tour,” said Cam. “We’ve had tons of people asking us to come to places like Tassie and Newcastle. We focused a lot on the capital cities last tour, this time we’re really looking forward to the regional shows. They should be a lot of fun, particularly our hometown show in Wollongong.”

Joining the band on tour will be Perth four-piece Death By Denim. After catching their spaced-out psychedelic tunes on the Triple J airwaves Cam thought they sounded awesome but wondered who they were. As fate would have it, the bands share the same agency and the connections were made to have them on the road as the support act.

With plans for more writing and some UK festival dates and shows in May, the rest of 2020 looks bright for The Vanns. Be sure to catch them on their regional tour at Wollongong Unibar on April 3rd. [w](#)

WATER STATIONS

Words by Paul Buckingham



As well as the devastation that rained down on homes, families, businesses and institutions over the summer, there was a substantial impact on local wildlife.

NPA Milton was just one of the many environmentally focussed organisations and individuals that quickly swung into action providing care and water for surviving animals.

Regions covered included South Pacific Heathland, Pointer Mountain, Narrawallee, Kioloa, Little Forest, Croobyar and many more.

NPA Milton Convener Brigitte Nairn, said that just one “Help Needed” Facebook post mustered 151 shares and resulted in 29 stations being installed by volunteers.

Unfortunately, NPA Milton has reached capacity replenishing the water stations but if you wish to get involved, you can contact Wildlife Stations Shoalhaven. [w](#)

[f @Wildlifestationsshoalhaven](#)



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IN THE GARDEN

Autumn is a pleasant season in the garden. There's still growth and activity in the plant world, but the worst of the heat is over for the year.



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We've ordered our deciduous and ornamental fruit trees. Have you? Want a showstopper in your garden? Order now so you get what you've been dreaming of!



PREPARATION IS KEY

Autumn in the garden is all about planning for what's ahead. It's time to prepare your garden by pruning, fertilising and mulching.



VEGGIE SUGGESTIONS

Plant Asian greens, rocket, beans, silver beet, basil, spinach, leeks, radish and spring onions right now, followed by broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower shortly after.



TIPS

A green manure crop is a great idea for revamping your veggie patch as it invigorates your soil and digests any nasties. •

*Gardenhaven Nursery
Lot 1 Princes Hwy, Milton NSW
2538 (Entrance via Bishop Drive)
P. 02 4455 2596
www.gardenhaven.com.au*



Land Of Fire

Words by Patrick Falconer, Illustration by Kyla Stone

Credit: Kyla Stone Art - @kylastoneart

Australia is a country designed to burn but I'm not sure I expected this level of destruction and devastation in my lifetime. After the summer bushfires we've experienced, I find myself wondering is this the new normal or a once in a hundred-year event?

We all know someone who has been fire impacted and we also know it is going to take some time to re-build houses and also minds. But meanwhile, the natural world is losing no time in restructuring its future.

Australia is the original Land of Fire. The bush is remarkably resilient to fire and has evolved with it for many millions of years. Indigenous land management practices include "cultural burning" to help prevent fire risks and protect native habitats.

Some wattle trees have seed so hard that they can only be triggered to open by heat. Many Banksia and Eucalypt species are reliant on smoke and heat to release seed and some Eucalypts will hold their seed until such time that heat or smoke initiates release.

Another little trick of some Australian plants is their Lignotubers, a bulb of reserve energy for such occasions. Within a few weeks, this helps the tree erupt epicormic shoots from dormant buds throughout its trunk and branches. This was already occurring here in early January.

Old Blotchy, the massive Spotted Gum in Termeil, has bark that will metamorphosise itself after fires, peeling off its insulating bark resulting in a stunning orange trunk. (I believe Old Blotchy was protected during the fires and is still standing tall. I'm not surprised, as she has seen it all before...)

We are all looking for small positives and at the moment I am absorbing all the new contrasting colours helping to divert my gaze from the devastation. Even the verdant fresh shoots in the paddocks are a shade of green we seldom see. I'm almost tempted to grab my son's paintbox.

We all love the South Coast for its natural beauty and we're encouraging people to come back and visit our special part of the world. While the new vista is indeed demoralising, the green resurgence gives us all hope. Thanks to recent widespread rain and nutrient-rich ash beds left by the fires, native trees are regenerating and their future is looking brighter.

Speaking from personal experience you would be surprised how many non-native plants can also recover from fire attack. So don't rip out everything just yet. If that favourite tree can resurge as a multi-shooted bush, then give it a chance. You might be surprised by their ability to recover.

Mother Nature is a tough Dominatrix and we are at her beck and call. For us, she is a destroyer but for this land, she is a liberator. [W](#)

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Small Things

PHOTOGRAPHY AND WORDS
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"Every dollar we part with can be consciously spent with the environment in mind. We choose today to make the change that will provide a brighter future for our children. It's ok to start small. Every little thing we do does matter."

📷 @rose.punch



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Bushfire Directory

WILDLIFE RESCUE

W. wildlife-rescue.org.au
P. 0418 427 214

WIRES

W. wires.org.au/donate/emergency-fund

RSPCA

W. rspcansw.org.au/bushfire-donate/

MILTON-ULLADULLA BUSINESS CHAMBER

Support for small businesses in our local community.
E. office@muchamber.com.au
P. 1300 459 319

SHOALHAVEN CITY COUNCIL

Mayoral Relief Fund and other initiatives.
W. shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

NSW RFS

W. rfs.nsw.gov.au

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Check in with your bank, a financial planner, Red Cross and Centrelink.

TREADING LIGHTLY

[@treading_lightly_inc](https://www.instagram.com/treading_lightly_inc)

RESILIENCE BEER

Resilience Beer brewed by Cupitt's, Dangerous Ales and Jervis Bay Brewing Co. A portion of sales going to those impacted by the bushfires. Available on tap at all three outlets.

SPEND WITH THEM

Shop in fire affected areas.
 [@spendwiththem](https://www.instagram.com/spendwiththem)

CHECK IN WITH YOUR GP

Free or bulk billed psychology and psychiatry services have been offered to people affected by the fires.

MONEY FREE WAYS TO HELP

- Visit change.org for various environmental petitions
- Write to your local MP with your environmental concerns
- Check in on others
- Donate your time to a community organisation
- Leave out water for animals
- Assist with accommodation

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AUTUMN EVENTS - CHECK OUT WHAT'S ON!

Mar

01

LA COMIDA

A special Mexican lunch.
Where: Rick Stein at Bannisters
When: 1 March
Contact: bannisters.com.au



05

INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY LUNCH

With guest speakers Monica Mudge and Pia Winberg.
Where: The Old Church At Milton
When: 5 March from 12-2.30pm
Contact: office@muchamber.com.au

CHEF'S CHOICE

Three courses and a glass of wine
Where: Tallwood Eatery
When: Monday nights
Contact: 02 4455 5192 or
www.tallwoodeat.com.au to book

6-7

THE MILTON SHOW

This year's theme is 'Capturing Country Life'.
Where: Milton Showground
When: 6-7 March
Contact: Tickets purchased on entry

07

DIESEL

Where: Milton Theatre
When: 7 March at 8pm
Contact: 02 4455 3056 for tickets

14

DYSON STRINGER CLOHER

Where: Milton Theatre
When: 14 March at 8pm
Contact: 02 4455 3056 for tickets

21

KIERAN KANE AND RAYNA GELLERT

Where: Milton Theatre
When: 21 March at 8pm
Contact: 02 4455 3056 for tickets

Apr

04

THE LACHY DOLEY GROUP

When: 4 April at 8pm
Where: Milton Theatre
Contact: 02 4455 3056 for tickets

12

MUSIC ON THE LAWN FUNDRAISER

With Brothers Band. Tickets \$15pp
Where: Cupitt's Estate
When: 12 April
Contact: 02 4455 7888

12

BLESSING OF THE FLEET FESTIVAL

Where: Ulladulla
When: 12 April. Live music at 10am.
Parade at 11.20am.
Contact: blessingofthefleet.info/
@ulladullablessingofthefleet

18

JEFF MARTIN

Where: Milton Theatre
When: 18 April at 8pm
Contact: 02 4455 3056 for tickets



24

THE AUDREYS

Where: Milton Theatre
When: 24 April at 8pm
Contact: 02 4455 3056 for tickets

24

BUSHFIRE FUNDRAISER

An exhibition of donated art including paintings, pottery, mosaics, woodwork and much more.
Where: Ulladulla Civic Centre
When: 24 April at 8pm
Contact: susan.curran5@bigpond.com

STREET FOOD SUNDAY

Where: Tallwood Eatery
When: First Sunday of each month from 12.30-5pm.
Contact: 02 4455 5192 to book

May

04

MILTON VILLAGE SHOWGROUND MARKETS

Where: Milton Showgrounds
When: 4 May (first Saturday of every month)
Contact: 02 4455 1799

09

THE TURNER BROWN BAND

When: 9 May at 8pm
Where: Milton Theatre
Contact: 02 4455 3056 for tickets

SUNDAY SESSIONS

Where: Bannisters Pavilion Rooftop
When: Every Sunday from 3-6pm followed by DJ from 6-9pm. \$6 drinks specials from 3-7pm.
Contact: bannisters.com.au

10

MOTHER'S DAY

Let's celebrate all of the amazing mums this Mother's Day.
When: 10 May

RODDY REASON

Where: Bannisters Pavilion Pool Bar
When: Every 1st, 3rd and 5th Friday of the month and alternate Sundays from 6pm.
Contact: bannisters.com.au

CUPITT'S SUNDAY SESSIONS

Live music on the lawns
Where: Cupitt's Estate
When: Every Sunday
Contact: 02 4455 7888

GROWERS MARKETS

Where: Cupitt's Estate
When: Last Saturday of the month
Contact: 02 4455 7888



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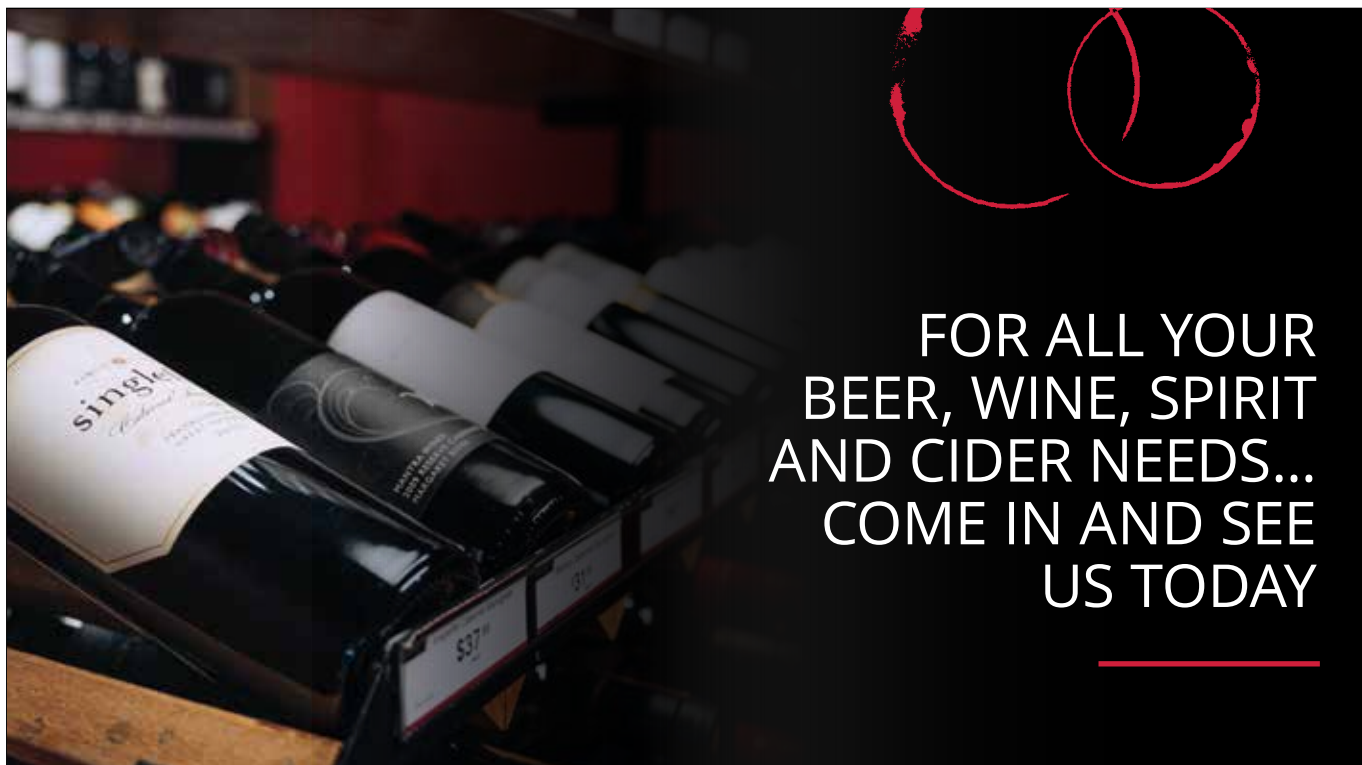


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