

The Kangaroo Valley Voice

FREE

AUGUST 2026



Mateship & Music

15 years of KV karaoke

WHY YES TO BESS

The McLennan's story
page 21

iPHONE FILMMAKING

Learn how in KV
page 11

A WEIGHTY ISSUE

Rosemary Stanton's insights
page 18



We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we live, work and play. Their sovereignty was never ceded and this always was, always will be Aboriginal land.

We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and their continuing connection to this Country.

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The *Kangaroo Valley Voice* is a monthly newspaper that aims to support and develop the Valley's economic, social and communication infrastructure.

All Valley residents, clubs and organisations are invited to forward editorial submissions.

There is not a January issue of the *Voice*.

The deadline for all submissions for the September issue is 18 August 2026.

Please send to:

thevoice@kangaroovalley.nsw.au

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The opinions expressed in the Voice are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the personal opinions of the Voice committee.

Welcome

One of the great privileges of producing the *Voice* is that every month we discover something new about our community.

Sometimes it's a new initiative or a fresh idea. Sometimes it's a person whose quiet contribution deserves to be celebrated. And sometimes it's a tradition that's been hiding in plain sight all along.

I'd heard about Kangaroo Valley karaoke for years. Like many people, I'd been meaning to go. I knew a bit about the legend, recognised a few of the names, and knew that on the last Saturday of every month the Friendly Inn came alive.

When I finally got around to it, I discovered that it wasn't so much about a night of entertainment.

Again, it was a community.

A community sustained for more than 15 years through passion, mateship and a shared commitment to creating a place where everyone is welcome. The singing is almost beside the point.

As I looked through the pages of this month's *Voice*, I realised that same thread runs throughout. Time and again we meet people who quietly keep showing up – building traditions, creating opportunities and strengthening the fabric of Kangaroo Valley.

These traditions don't just survive by chance. They endure because people value them, nurture them and invite others to become part of them.

We hope you enjoy discovering a few more of them in this month's issue.

Julie Ward
Editorial Director

In this issue ...

3 | From fireside meetings to Show day – The Show committee embraces new ways of working

4 | Petanque returns to the Friendly Inn – Bastille Day brings 220 players together

6 | Celebrating an extraordinary milestone – Margaret Barton retires after more than 50 years at KVPS

8 | KVPS Tennis Team reaches state semifinals – Plus a thank you from Golf Day

11 | Valley Shorts Film Night & Workshops now on sale – A new season of filmmaking begins

13 | From restoration to stewardship – Why Hampden Bridge needs a long-term Trust

14 | The Karaoke Club – Fifteen years of mateship and music at the Friendly Inn

18 | Weighty matters – Dr Rosemary Stanton explores why body weight is far more than willpower

21 | Why we said yes to BESS – One family's decision to host a community battery

22 | The KV Artists Collective: Inside Kerrie Leishman's studio

26 | NAIDOC Screening success – Audience reflections from a memorable evening

27 | Zoe Elliot celebrates – Looking back at her EP launch

28 | Keeping Cats Safe at Home – Protecting wildlife while caring for our cats

30 | Citrus success – Celebrating Kangaroo Valley's citrus harvest

PLUS our regular features from around the Valley

From fireside meetings to Show day

One of my favourite moments from the past few months wasn't at the Showground at all. It was our first committee Zoom meeting.

It was a freezing winter evening, everyone was at home in front of a fire, many with what looked suspiciously like a medicinal glass of red, and almost every square on the Zoom screen was filled.

It struck me then that while the Kangaroo Valley Show is proudly traditional, the way we work doesn't have to be. Our committee is made up of people with different skills, ideas and interests, all finding ways to contribute that fit around busy lives.

The 2026 KV Show was another wonderful reminder of what can happen when a community pulls together. From the horse rings and pavilion to Kids' Day, Valley Shorts, entertainment, volunteers and all the moving parts in between, hundreds of people played

a role in creating a weekend of which we're all so proud.

Please join us

As we begin planning for 2027, we'd love to welcome some new faces and fresh ideas.

You don't need to be putting your hand up for the committee to come along.

The AGM is open to all members, and it's a chance to hear what's planned, ask questions and perhaps throw an idea into the mix.

One of the things we're discovering is that if someone has a good idea, there's usually someone else willing to help make it happen.

Alongside the committee, we're also building more subcommittees and project groups. They're a great way for people to contribute without taking on a year-round commitment,

while bringing fresh ideas, new skills and different community perspectives to the Show.

Whether you have experience to share, a practical skill, a creative idea or simply enjoy being part of one of the Valley's most-loved traditions, we'd love to see you there.

Kangaroo Valley Show AGM

Monday 10 August, 7.00pm

Kangaroo Valley Hall

The Show belongs to all of us. We'd love you to be part of shaping what comes next.

Stephen Wilson
President



STOP PRESS World first platypus centre announced for the Valley



Just as the Kangaroo Valley Voice was about to go to print, news broke of a remarkable conservation initiative set to put the Valley on the map.

After 12 years of planning, Wilderness Experience Training and Wildlife Recovery Australia have announced they are joining forces to establish what is being described as the world's first dedicated platypus conservancy and interpretation centre.

To be known as the **Djamilang Conservancy and Interpretation Centre** – *Djamilang* being the Dharawal word for platypus – the facility will be based in the Valley, with its exact location yet to be revealed.

The announcement was made by local conservation advocate **Michael Hayes**, who described the project as 12 years in the making. The centre will be developed in partnership with Wildlife Recovery Australia, whose CEO, **Dr Stephen Van Mil**, and Chairman, **Dr Ken Henry**, will join Hayes at the official launch.

The announcement prompted an outpouring of support for Michael

Hayes and the initiative on Facebook. Graeme Cochrane captured the mood of many when he wrote: "I know this project has been a burning passion inside you for many years. You've turned that passion into a dream and now reality."

With platypus populations under increasing pressure across Australia, the centre promises to become a significant hub for conservation, education and interpretation, while adding another distinctive attraction to the Valley's growing reputation for environmental leadership.

Heartfelt invitation

Mike is encouraging the community to be part of the launch. "We would like to invite any interested community members to the official launch ... I want you all to be a part of it. This is for OUR community."

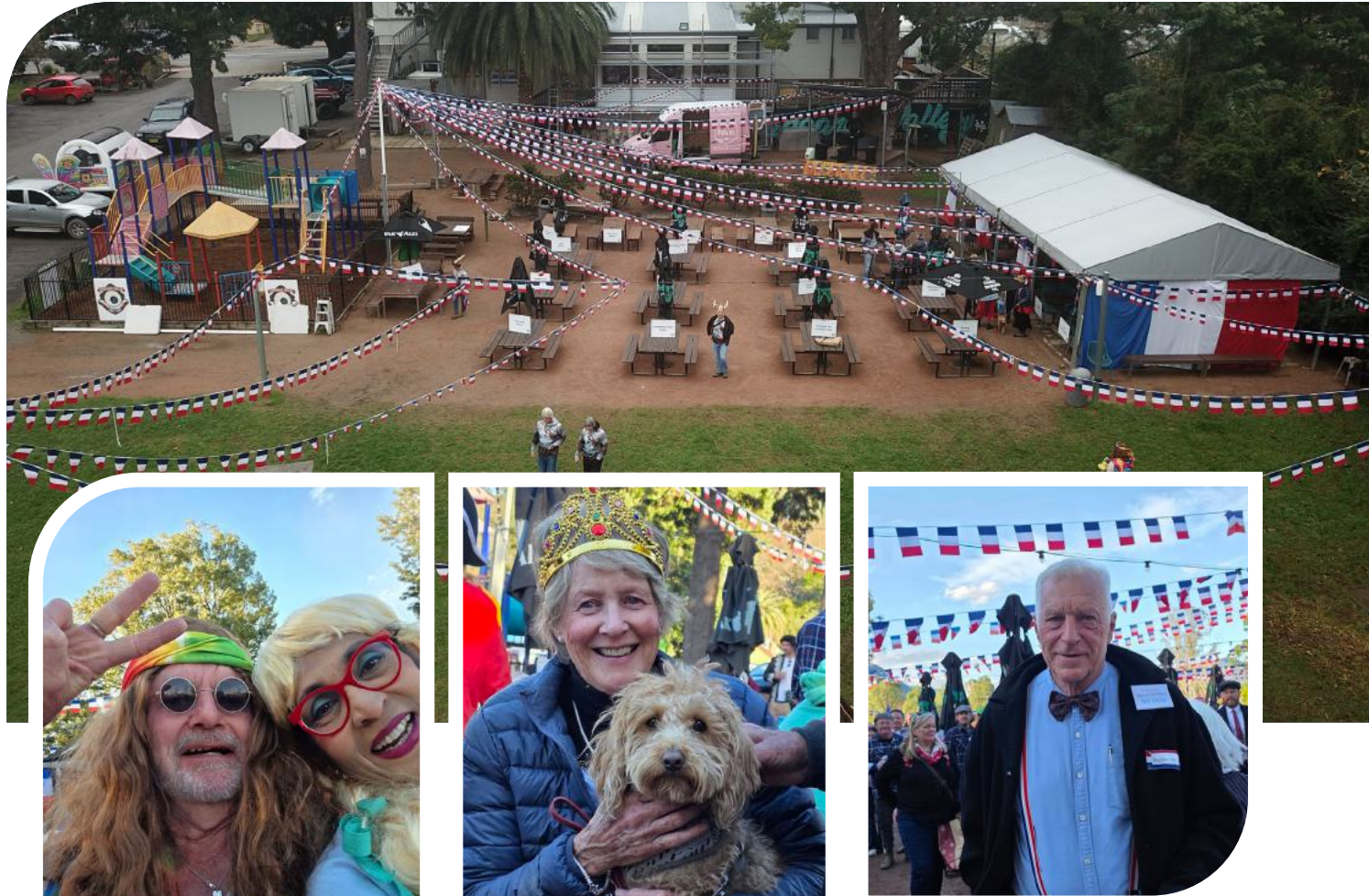
Wednesday 26 August 6.00pm

Wildlife Recovery Australia Headquarters

110 Moss Vale Road, Kangaroo Valley

The *Voice* looks forward to bringing readers more about the Djamilang Conservancy and Interpretation Centre in our September issue.





Petanque returns for another year

Lots of fun, lots of happy participants, all round a great day

On Saturday 11 July, the Kangaroo Valley Petanque Club hosted the annual Bastille Day Petanque Festival. A massive 28 teams played this year, which brought more than 220 eager players together for a day of elite athleticism and fun.

Preparations for the day started many months ago and culminated in a burst of activity over the two preceding days, which turned the pub beer garden into a French inspired arena, the sights of which have never been seen before (except for last year ... oh, and the year before). The day started somewhat fog-bound but as the Valley does, the weather cleared to an absolutely magnificent clear blue sky. The air was cool, fresh and filled with anticipation.

Frank Barker performed the opening ceremony and then control was passed to the Headmaster, Chris Treuen, to officiate and adjudicate; an unenviable job given the stakes. Each team (some dressed to the extreme) played six other teams, back to back. It was exhausting but so much fun – and sometimes a little loud. The banter was first class and added to the amazing atmosphere.



Best dressed wins bubbles
Once the initial rounds were complete, the mystery judges revealed the winner of the best dressed team, which was taken out by The Rolling Stoners. Their prize was a magnum of Moet & Chandon. Well deserved. All the teams did a fantastic job of dressing for the occasion.
The quarter finals saw Beaumont Brothers play Berry Obutz, Wollongong Whales play Barrengarry Bombers, Illawarra Steelers play Cambewarra Croissants and Sydney Sixers play Kangaroo Valley Green. Those battles resulted in Berry Obutz playing Wollongong Whales and Cambewarra Croissants playing Kangaroo Valley Green in the semifinals. The teams had been playing all day but showed no signs of slowing down.

The final countdown
The final was a tense stand-off between Wollongong Whales and Kangaroo Valley Green. Our local team did us proud and pulled off a magnificent 9-5 win, bringing the shield back home for another year. We are all so proud.
The committee would like to pass on our thanks and gratitude to the Friendly Inn and our band of inexhaustible volunteers for their support and assistance.
Vive les balls of steel!
Until next year.

Al Lockyer
Photography credits:
Sally Latham and Intan Kallus





Margaret Barton (red jacket).

Celebrating an extraordinary milestone

Margaret Barton retires after more than 50 years at KVPS

On Monday 20 July, Kangaroo Valley Public School marked the end of an era as we farewelled our School Administrative Manager, Margaret Barton, following more than 50 years of dedicated service to our school community.

To spend more than half a century working in the same school is a truly remarkable achievement. Throughout her career, Margaret has been a constant presence at KVPS, supporting generations of students, families, teachers and principals. Few people can claim to have witnessed the changes in education, technology and school life that Margaret has experienced during her time at the school.

When Margaret commenced at KVPS in the 1970s, school administration looked very different. Over the decades, she has seen the transition from handwritten records, typewriters and paper-based systems to the digital technologies and complex administrative processes used in schools today. Through every change, Margaret has remained committed to ensuring the school continues to operate efficiently and effectively.

The role of School Administrative Manager is often one that works behind the scenes, yet it is

essential to the successful operation of a school. For more than 50 years Margaret has provided continuity, organisation and administrative expertise, supporting staff, students and families through countless milestones, celebrations and challenges.

Her longevity at KVPS is a testament to her dedication, perseverance and commitment to public education. During her time at the school, she has worked alongside numerous principals and staff members and has played a part in the educational journey of generations of local children. Her knowledge of the school and its history is unparalleled, and her contribution to our community over more than five decades has been significant.

As Margaret begins her well-earned retirement, we thank her for her extraordinary service to KVPS and acknowledge the lasting contribution she has made to our school community.

On behalf of current and past students, families and staff, we congratulate Margaret on her remarkable career and wish her good health, happiness and many rewarding years ahead in retirement.

Jen Arnott
Principal
Kangaroo Valley Public School



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KVPS Tennis Team reaches state semifinals



Kangaroo Valley Public School has secured a semifinal berth in the Victor J Kelly Cup State Finals! They are now one of the top four public school tennis teams in NSW!

Throughout this year, the KVPS tennis team – Artie Cooke, Elijah Hole, Logan Champion, Matilda Hole, Juliet Mumm and Millicent Amor – gradually worked their way through this statewide knockout school tennis tournament. They defeated Gunning, Cambewarra,

Gerrigong and Ulladulla to become the South Coast champions, dropping just one set on the road to the regional title. The NSW quarterfinal against Hay, who also successfully topped their region, was a nail-biter. We travelled together as a team on Kate's tennis bus and from the beginning we knew it was going to be a very close battle! Each tie consists of four singles matches, two doubles (boys and girls) and two mixed doubles. Both teams played some fabulous tennis and the standard was exceptionally high. In the end, both teams won four sets but Kangaroo Valley were

ahead in games, taking the tie 38 games to 36. The team was absolutely thrilled – and the coaches' heart rates returned to normal after a tense day of tennis! The team now heads to Sydney to play the semifinal and potential final next term. Last time KVPS won this competition was way back in 1993, so we hope to take the title again. Congratulations to the kids on how well they competed and faced that pressure and fought for every game. We are so proud of you!

Kate Hole – Coach



Golf Day – thank you!

A huge thank you to everyone who supported the Gentleman's Golf Day on Friday 26 June.

Our little school appreciates the generosity of everyone who attends, donates to or sponsors the event. A special thank you to Brad, Linc and all those who take the lead on organising such a great community event that brings everyone together for a great cause. Thank you!

*Jen Arnott
Principal
Kangaroo Valley Public School*



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Valley Shorts Film Night & Workshops now on sale

Tickets are now on sale for the Valley Shorts Season Launch Weekend, with two days of films, learning and storytelling set to launch the 2027 competition.

The weekend begins on **Saturday 19 September** at Kangaroo Valley Hall with a special screening celebrating the first two years of Valley Shorts. Along with a selection of finalist films, the evening will include the unveiling

of the 2027 Valley Shorts theme, giving local filmmakers their first glimpse of the challenge for the year ahead.

On **Sunday 20 September**, Valley Shorts introduces StoryLab – a new series of practical workshops led by award-winning filmmaker Angela Blake.

Designed for anyone interested in telling stories on screen, StoryLab offers three workshops covering family filmmaking, getting the most from the camera you already own, and the craft

of storytelling itself. Whether you're planning to enter Valley Shorts in 2027 or simply keen to develop new creative skills, there's a workshop to suit every level of experience.

The launch weekend marks the beginning of an exciting new season for Valley Shorts, with **valleyshorts.com.au** becoming the new home of the competition. The website will bring together competition information, StoryLab, past films, news and updates as the season unfolds.

Scan the QR codes below to book your place.

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From restoration to stewardship In Bridge we Trust

Last month we reported encouraging progress in the campaign to secure Hampden Bridge's future, with restoration planning moving in a positive direction and the proposed feasibility study paused.

For many involved in the campaign, however, restoring the bridge is only part of the story. The bigger question is how we ensure Hampden Bridge never again falls into a cycle of uncertainty, deferred maintenance and competing priorities.

One idea that has been discussed throughout the campaign – and is now emerging as its next phase – is the creation of a Hampden Bridge Trust. Peter Botsman has been closely involved in those conversations and outlines below why he believes an independent trust could provide long-term stewardship of one of Australia's most significant historic bridges.

Ed.

Kangaroo Valley stands at a crossroads. As a caring and forward-looking community, we can choose to actively protect our irreplaceable assets and quality of life. Alternatively we can allow ourselves to be the victims of sectional interests, bureaucratic inertia and piecemeal fixes. The future of Hampden Bridge, our iconic 1898 de Burgh suspension bridge, demands we choose the former.



Let's choose foresight over fragmentation.

dedicated **Hampden Bridge Trust**, modelled on the successful Sydney Harbour Bridge Trust, would provide the independent oversight, expert heritage management and community voice this State Heritage Register icon requires. It would deliver consistent governance for maintenance and strengthening to full 42.5-tonne capacity, shielding the bridge from stop-start departmental priorities.

Sustainable funding models could include an initial government endowment, tourism levies or visitor contributions, philanthropic

grants, heritage partnerships and revenue from managed experiences. Proven models show these can create a self-sustaining endowment for long-term conservation while keeping costs off local ratepayers.

Hampden Bridge is a vital cog in a sustainable transport corridor serving the Burrenbar and Cambewarra mountains. Restoring its full capacity supports local farming and business, emergency services, tourism buses, and some freight movement – reducing pressure on steep mountain routes while preserving the Valley's liveability.

Enhancing the bridge as a premier tourist magnet is equally important. Controlled access to the sandstone arches for guided walks – echoing the Sydney Harbour Bridge experience – would generate revenue, create local jobs and offer breathtaking river and landscape views. Combined with the Trust's stewardship, this low-impact innovation would boost the local economy without compromising heritage values.

The community must be proactive in advocating for the Hampden Bridge Trust. TfNSW's ongoing repairs are positive, but only a dedicated Trust ensures long-term vision and success. Let's choose foresight over fragmentation.

The voice of Kangaroo Valley should be clear: we will not settle for less than a protected, vibrant future for our bridge and our community.

Peter Botsman

Friends of Hampden Bridge

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Meet the regulars

Four voices, one microphone and 15 years of Saturday nights between them. Here's who to look out for next time you're at the Friendly Inn, the last Saturday of the month.



Simon Russell

The one who started it all

A local fence builder who kicked things off about 15 years ago with SingStar nights at home, before Pete from the Friendly Inn turned it into the real thing.

Signature songs: 'Angels', 'Sweet Caroline', 'My Way' – and 'Footloose' when he wants everyone on their feet.

Once had his rendition of 'Angels' turned down for *The Valley* documentary – by Robbie Williams' own management.

"I stopped singing for a minute, and the whole pub was singing at the top of their voice. This is what it's all about."



Greg 'Tigga' Jessop

The original, still going strong

Part of the founding trio with Simon and Mardi. Trained in opera at the Wollongong Conservatorium as a boy – until he chose cigarettes over singing lessons.

Signature songs: That same voice, a few decades smokier now, leans into 'Mustang Sally' as his calling card; 'Hallelujah' shows a different side entirely.

Just as likely to be off at a musical in Sydney with his Mum and Dad – old habits, new stage.

"It is definitely a binding part of the Valley."



Frank Barker

The unofficial MC of good vibes

Joined about a decade ago after staying back for 'one song' at a family dinner. Hasn't missed many since – bar the odd Manly Sea Eagles home game.

Signature songs: 'Come Back Again' and 'Eagle Rock' (both Daddy Cool), and a reliable 'Gangnam Style' for the tourists. Can't remember a lyric to save himself, which is exactly why karaoke suits him.

The self-appointed sergeant-at-arms: hand a heckler the song book and tell them to get up or shut up.

"I swear it is the best night at the pub in the Valley every month, because people just seem to be happy all night."



Brad Harvey

The one who drives down for it

Met Simon through his wife Courtney and never looked back. Moved up to the Highlands years ago, but wouldn't miss the monthly reunion.

Signature songs: 'Suspicious Minds' was his first song. Now known equally for his Elvis, his Tom Jones and his spot-on Billy Connolly impression.

Not much of a pub regular otherwise – for Brad, this is purely about catching up with his tribe.

"There's a certain turning in the night that just suddenly there's a big crowd and everyone's off – it's magical, really."

The Karaoke Club

Fifteen years of Kangaroo Valley's monthly karaoke night – and the mates who won't miss one

Every town has its clubs. There's the Tennis Club, the Bridge Club, the Garden Club – the regular gatherings that gently hold a community together, one familiar face at a time. Kangaroo Valley has all of those. It also has a Karaoke Club, and one night a month, for 15 years now, it has drawn together a crew every bit as loyal as any club on the roll. The only difference is the clubhouse is the front bar of the pub, and the membership fee is having a go.

This particular club started in a lounge room. About 15 years ago, Simon Russell, a local fence builder, began hosting informal singalong nights at home with a Sony SingStar console. Word got around, and Pete, friend and publican of the Friendly Inn, offered to put on a proper karaoke night. "Everyone chickened out except my wife and I," Simon recalls. "We said, we've got to go – this probably cost him a lot of money."

Simon was soon joined by gardener Greg

It's mateship dressed up as music.

'Tigga' Jessop and Mardi Oakey – and 'The Tigga, Simon and Mardi Show' was born. Mardi has since moved down the coast, but the night she helped build has only grown. Brad Harvey, the chimney sweep, was another one of the early first-timers, along with real estate agent Frank Barker, who arrived almost by accident about a decade ago, staying back after a family dinner for "one song" and never really leaving.

No experience required

What's notable about most of the early participants is how little singing experience any of them actually had. Simon had never sung a note before SingStar. Frank, by his own admission, is "really bad with lyrics" – which is exactly why karaoke suits him. "I know every beat to every song, almost down to the microsecond, but I don't remember the words. That's what I love about karaoke – it gets me through the song." Brad wasn't much of a performer either – by his own account he's "a bit of a homebody", not really a pub-goer outside of this one night a month. Nobody

arrived a natural. They just arrived, and kept coming back.

Tigga is the exception, and even his story has a twist. As a boy he trained in opera at the Wollongong Conservatorium, until his teacher told him he'd have to give up smoking to keep training, and he chose the cigarettes. These days that same voice, a few decades smokier, leans into a different songbook: 'Mustang Sally' is his calling card, while 'Hallelujah' shows a side of him nobody expects. He's also the regular most likely to be missing from the table for something equally in character – around the time we spoke to him, he was off to Sydney with his parents to see a musical, fittingly *The Greatest Showman*.

Familiar fun

These days the karaoke night has settled into a familiar shape: monthly, no cost, no fuss and a regular crew who commandeer the same table the way others commandeer a spot at the pool table or a spare court on Tuesday nights. It's mateship dressed up as music. "It is definitely a binding part of the Valley," says Tigga. "The same people come all the time – the people that sing, and the people that come to enjoy it, come all the time as well."

It is, by most accounts, close to unmissable. →

Thanks to *The Valley*

Thanks to Shark Island Films and Ian Darling for sharing frames from the acclaimed documentary *The Valley* for our karaoke story.

The Valley will be screening on 30 August at 9.30am at Huskisson Pictures as part of the Travelling Film Festival. There will be a Q&A

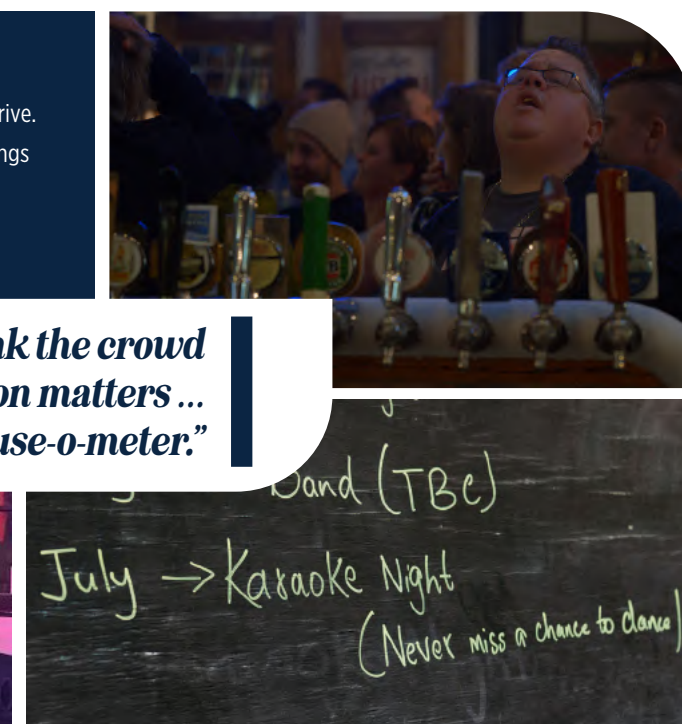
afterwards, so well worth the drive.

There will be additional screenings coming up soon, so stay in touch via the website <https://thevalleyfilm.au/>

"I think the crowd interaction matters... the applause-o-meter."



Mel sets the stage



→ Frank has season tickets to the Manly Sea Eagles, and on the rare occasion a home game clashes with karaoke night, there's only one winner – “the Eagles will always beat karaoke,” he admits, “but everything else gets moved around it.” Brad, who moved up to the Highlands years ago, has an even longer trip to make and still doesn't miss it – for him it's less about the singing and more about the reunion. “It's my tribe,” he says. “I'm not really a pub person otherwise. But this – this I don't miss.”

There used to be prize money on offer, until Simon kept winning it four months running and the crowd “were getting the poops”. The prize was quietly scrapped. “I don't want people to think I'm a big head,” he says, “but I think the crowd interaction matters more – the applause-o-meter.”

It's the room

Frank has quietly appointed himself the night's unofficial sergeant-at-arms: hand a heckler the song book and tell them to get up or shut up. “Let them be a rock star for three minutes and 32 seconds. That's their thing. Why don't you embrace it instead of knock it and judge it?”

Brad does his own version, minus the policing: he's better known for coaxing shy first-timers up with a laugh, and for his Billy Connolly impression, honed for a Comedy Night fundraiser for a young local who'd broken his leg.

Ask anyone why it works and they'll circle back

to the room – small and intimate, everyone close enough to feel part of the performance. Regulars who've tried karaoke at bigger venues say it never quite lands the same way. “It's more the room,” Frank says. “You're closer in on each other, rather than singing across a wide stage.” Brad agrees, and reckons half the fun these days is simply catching up with old mates.

All runs smoothly with Mel

None of it would run without Mel, the night's much-loved DJ. She arrives about 15 minutes before ‘curtain’ and magically transforms the corner of the front bar into a stage with lights, mics, and the all-important lyrics screens. She coaxes nervous first-timers up with a duet and keeps the songbooks in order. “We absolutely adore Mel” – is the closest thing to a consensus view among the regulars. “It wouldn't be what it is without her.”

“Absolutely go for it, you'll be embraced.”

It's Mel, along with Frank and Brad, who have a story they tell carefully, so as not to spoil anything: a young local woman who spent months quietly watching from the sidelines before finally getting up to sing. When she did, she brought the house down. The regulars encouraged her to audition for *The Voice* – and a few of them went along in person to watch her

‘blind audition’. Did she turn a chair? Keep an eye on your screens, Channel 7, over the coming weeks.

Just go for it

The Karaoke Club also makes an appearance in the long-awaited documentary about the Valley. Ian Darling's *The Valley* was cut down by editor Sally Fryer from 330 hours of footage to a lean three. Frank, who usually falls asleep in the cinema, barely nodded off across the whole running time. “It shows how community turns up in different ways in the Valley,” he says. “Karaoke is one of those ways.”

For newcomers wondering whether to have a go, the advice is unanimous: just get up. “Absolutely go for it, you'll be embraced,” says Frank. Or, as Brad puts it, watching the room shift from a quiet start to a packed, singing-along crowd is “a certain turning in the night – and it's magical, really”.

Fifteen years on from a lounge room and a SingStar console, Kangaroo Valley's karaoke night remains proof that you don't need a big stage, a prize or a great voice to bring a community together. Like the Tennis Club or the Bridge Club, the Karaoke Club is really just an excuse to turn up for each other, month after month: the last Saturday of each month. You just need a song everyone knows the words to, and a room full of people willing to sing along.

Julie Ward



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10 crowd-pleasing karaoke bangers to try

Fancy a go but don't want to compete with ‘Angels’ or ‘Mustang Sally’? The secret to avoiding over exposure is to get the crowd to sing along. Here are 10 the regulars haven't already claimed as their own (as far as we know).

1 ‘Livin’ on a Prayer’ – Bon Jovi

The ultimate group shout-along; everyone knows the “whoa, we're halfway there” bit, even if they know nothing else.

2 ‘Don't Stop Believin’ – Journey

Karaoke's unofficial national anthem. Impossible to sing badly enough to kill the room.

3 ‘I Will Survive’ – Gloria Gaynor

A guaranteed hands-in-the-air moment, especially with a bit of attitude.

4 ‘The Voice’ – John Farnham

An Aussie anthem in the truest sense; huge, soaring and practically guaranteed to get the whole pub singing along by the second chorus. Not for the faint-hearted, but nail it and you'll be talked about for months.

5 ‘Total Eclipse of the Heart’ – Bonnie Tyler

Big, dramatic and made for someone willing to really lean into it.

6 ‘Dancing Queen’ – ABBA

A safer, gentler ABBA pick than ‘Mama Mia’ – easy key, easy sing-along

7 ‘Summer Nights’ – Grease

A killer duet with a gender chorus split that everyone is guaranteed to join in right to the great ending.

8 ‘Come On Eileen’ – Dexys Midnight Runners

Get past the longest intro ever, meet the lyrics of the verse and get the crowd joining in from to-ra-loo-ra-too-ra-loo-ra ...

9 ‘Islands in the Stream’ – Kenny Rogers & Dolly Parton

The classic country duet; equal parts harmony and old-fashioned charm, best with two people who don't mind a bit of twang.

10 ‘Someone Like You’ – Adele

The ultimate hands-on-heart ballad; strips the room right down to a hush, then brings it back up on that chorus. Needs nerve more than range, and it always lands.

Should karaoke night take the stage at the KV Show?

There's talk around the Valley of giving karaoke night a spot at the Show on Locals' Friday night – a chance for the whole community, kids and all, to sample these legends and to grab the mic under the lights.

We want to know what you think.

Give us a thumbs up or thumbs down via the QR code.



Weighty matters

– why body weight is about far more than willpower

As a nutritionist, I don't like talking about body weight, mainly because I don't judge people by their weight. I'm also critical of the idea of going 'on' a diet because it means later going 'off' the diet.

Many factors influence body weight, including genes. For example, those who are tall have an obvious advantage in that they usually need to eat more than someone who is short. Body types can also be inherited and can influence how we move and how much we move.

Some people are born 'movers' from birth. Some babies lie still for much of the time; others wriggle, wave their legs and arms and constantly turn their little bodies around. These children may also crawl more, walk early, progress to running and generally enjoy active sports.

Among adults, 'movers' tend to wave their arms when they talk, cross and uncross their legs and are miserable if they have to stay seated for hours. Their constant activity is sometimes labelled as 'fidgeting' but their constant movement may keep them slim because it burns off energy that may otherwise become stored as body fat.

Lifestyle

Modern lifestyles have resulted in the majority of the population carrying more body fat than previous generations. Again, movement is involved and most of us expend much less energy in everyday life. Our push-button, 'wash and wipe' lives need less energy than when people had to stand up and walk across the room to change the TV channel, get down on hands and knees to scrub the floor, walk to local shops – often daily – and carry goods home rather than filling a supermarket trolley,

loading it into the car and driving home. We use machines for many physical tasks and don't even have to wind down car windows.

Food supply

The food supply has also changed. When Woolworths changed from chain stores to supermarkets in the 1960s, their sales manager said they'd need to expand from approximately 600 to 800 foods being available in Australia (his estimate) to a minimum of 2000 items. Today's supermarkets stock about 30,000 of the 50,000 different food products available. Many are highly processed.

Our push-button, 'wash and wipe' lives need less energy than when people had to stand up and walk across the room to change the TV channel.

We've long had some vegetables, fruits and selected fish processed by canning, and jams made from fruit and sugar. Nowadays, tens of thousands of foods are defined as 'ultra

processed'. They contain literally hundreds of ingredients never found in a home kitchen – preservatives, artificial colourings and flavourings, emulsifiers, hydrogenated fats, anti-caking agents, acidity regulators.

It's fine to enjoy some of these foods occasionally, but they now supply 50 per cent of the kilojoules for the average Australian child. Adults are not far behind and intake in the United States is even higher. Where traditional foods are valued more, for example in Southern Italy and other Mediterranean areas, and some Asian countries, consumption of ultra processed foods is much lower.

As food companies expand to worldwide dominance, ultra processed foods are increasing. They claim their aim is to save time and this fits with the role of women expanding from a domestic load to external workplaces and associated travel. Ultra processed foods are seen as the easy convenient choice, with sales boosted by advertising and promotions.

Ultra processed foods are specifically formulated to require little eating time or effort. Most are soft with little dietary fibre, thus avoiding the need for chewing. Many crispy, sweet or savoury 'treats' are designed to instantly dissolve in the mouth. Dentists say the increasing variety of such foods has adverse effects on children's dental health. When a food doesn't need much chewing and passes quickly to the stomach, it's easy to eat more.

The results

The body does have a natural satiety mechanism, but it takes time to kick in and tell you you've had enough food. The combination of less movement to burn kilojoules and foods that pass through the stomach too quickly to stimulate the normal 'I'm full, stop eating' mechanism, means humans have grown fatter. Old photos confirm that almost everyone looks rather slimmer than those of ordinary individuals or groups these days.

Studies clearly show that whatever definition is used, both overweight and obesity have increased substantially in every world region, even since 1990. A major report from the *Lancet* medical journal predicts that without urgent policy reform and action, over half of those aged 25 or above (3.8 billion) and about a third of all children and young people (746 million) are likely to be above healthy weight by 2050.

Excess body fat is a problem as it increases the risk of type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and 13 types of cancer.

What can be done?

What we choose to eat and drink and the quantity consumed are obviously relevant – as is physical activity, but it's simplistic to just tell everyone to move more and eat less.

Lifestyles can get in the way and people eat for many reasons. Many foods taste wonderful and

they're a vital part of celebrations.

Some wonderful people who care for others may subconsciously eat for their own comfort. Others may find physical activity difficult and relevant genetic factors should not be forgotten.

Extremes are also dangerous. Children need to grow normally and as people grow old, losing too much weight can be unhealthy.

A huge range of diets are promoted by their authors – but many are unhealthy and the weight loss is from muscle and fluid rather than excess fat. Where possible, the ideal option is to make small and appropriate changes to eating, drinking and physical activity that you can live with as permanent habits for life. No one suggests this is easy. Could drug companies help?

GLP-1 drugs (Glucagon-like peptide-1)

Promoted by many as the answer to every fat person's problem, a variety of products have hit the headlines recently. The most memorable may be Ozempic, a drug given by injection, but other brands are following with companies keen to develop oral versions.

GLP-1 is a hormone made within the small intestine. As part of its action, it triggers the release of insulin, a hormone made in the pancreas. Insulin lowers the level of glucose in the blood, although it can also raise blood sugar levels when necessary.

GLP-1 agonists are a class of medications originally designed to help manage blood sugar levels in people with type 2 diabetes.

An agonist is a manufactured substance that attaches to a cell receptor and causes the same action as the naturally occurring substance, so GLP-1 agonists prevent more glucose going into the blood. They also slow the rate at which food in the stomach passes to the small intestine. This means they create a full feeling, as should occur normally after eating.

However, their effect is usually stronger than what should occur normally and they make eating unpleasant. Studies show good weight loss with these drugs, but as well as their huge cost, we need to consider the following:

- no long-term studies have yet been published that might show adverse effects on health
- unpleasant effects from food lead to

deficiencies of some nutrients

- the usual pleasures and social occasions associated with eating may cease
- adverse effects are likely to occur with the good bacteria that accompany a healthy high-fibre diet.

These complications are particularly relevant for nutritionists. As discussed last month, the valuable types of dietary fibre have proven benefits for many health issues, especially bowel

cancer. As Australia tops the world in the incidence of this type of cancer, anyone who decides to use these drugs needs expert advice. Whereas they may have great benefits for those with untreated type 2 diabetes, their use for straight weight loss leaves many doubts and massive costs for the Australian Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

Online sales of oral versions of these drugs are also being peddled by unscrupulous merchants. They are of unknown quality or origin and no one should risk taking them.

Dr Rosemary Stanton OAM
Nutritionist



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Our farm, our family, our Valley – and why we said yes

Mark and Kristen McLennan, Bendeela Road

We have lived in Kangaroo Valley since 2004. We have raised our two daughters here, developed community events, built three businesses, and watched this community hold itself together through floods, droughts, fires and a pandemic. We are not outsiders. This is our home.

We want to be honest with you about the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) on our farm – who we are, why we agreed to host it, what we believe about it, and what we think the community deserves to know. We are aware that concerns have been raised, some of which we believe are not fully informed. There are always two sides to a story.

Who we are

We were fortunate to purchase our farm from a couple who cared deeply about the property, and we remain grateful every day for the opportunity to have called this piece of land our own. We have since poured years of blood, sweat and tears into making it what it is today – and that investment, emotional as much as physical, is precisely why decisions about its future are never taken lightly.

Kristen runs Kangaroo Valley Pastured Eggs. She built it from 50 chickens into one of Australia's largest pastured egg operations – recognised nationally for its commitment to genuine free-range farming. The *Sydney Morning Herald* put it on the front page. She employs 11 people. She did all of this after leaving teaching, and after overcoming breast cancer in 2017. We are proud of what she has built, and we are proud of the contribution it makes to the clean, green reputation this Valley has earned.

Mark runs Delicious Gardens – a landscaping, garden maintenance and property care business he started in 2010. It employs six full-time staff and serves around 80 clients across the Valley. It is one of the larger businesses of its kind in the Shoalhaven.

Both businesses will continue to operate if the BESS proceeds. The egg farm will run 365 days a year, as it has for the past 10 years – including during construction around the project. It is our intention to expand the egg operation around the project footprint, not reduce it.

Why we said yes

We want to be transparent. This is a commercial lease arrangement, and yes, we stand to benefit financially from it. We make no apology for that – it is our land, and this is our livelihood. But it was not a decision made lightly or quickly.



We said yes because we believe this project makes sense – for the grid, for the region, and for this specific piece of land. The farm's southern paddock is flat, cleared, actively farmed, and sits adjacent to the 330kV switching station that serves as one of the most strategically important transmission points in New South Wales. The power connection will be underground – through the property, parallel to the existing high voltage lines, and under Bendeela Road to the switching station. There are no plans for new power poles.

We also believe Australia's energy transition is real, urgent, and happening whether any of us choose to engage with it or not. Eraring Power Station – the largest coal plant in Australia – closes in August 2027. The grid needs storage. The question is not whether battery projects like this will be built. The question is where, and those places are limited due to the connection infrastructure.

We have heard the community's concerns

We have read every article published in this publication and have listened in, at the community sessions. We want to address the main concerns directly – briefly here, and in much greater depth in the months ahead:

• **Fire risk.** The battery type proposed for this project – lithium iron phosphate (LFP) – is the same chemistry in the home batteries already installed in over 380,000 Australian households. It is fundamentally safer and more thermally stable than older battery chemistries. The APZ [Asset Protection Zone] for the project is 80 metres from any flammable bush/vegetation. A mandatory Bushfire Risk Assessment, prepared in consultation with the NSW Rural Fire Service, is required as part of the Environmental Impact Statement. We take this seriously. So does AGL.

• **Water and environmental contamination.** Standard engineering requirements for projects of this type include bundled containment pads, sealed hardstanding areas, and stormwater management systems specifically designed to prevent any runoff from entering waterways. These are not optional – they are regulatory conditions.

• **Wildlife and vegetation.** Our site is actively farmed, cleared pasture. It is fenced and managed to protect our chickens from predators – meaning it is already largely excluded from the larger wildlife many are concerned about. There are two small areas of tree plantings within the proposed footprint that will be assessed in the mandatory Biodiversity Assessment Report.

• **Visual impact and noise.** The BESS sits at the southern end of our property – the flattest, most cleared area, furthest from neighbouring homes, with natural screening in multiple directions. Battery containers sit approximately 2.5–3 metres high. Operational noise at neighbouring properties will comply with NSW rural noise standards.

• **What happens at the end.** The lease is for 20 years, with a five-year option. At the end of the lease, AGL is contractually required to remove all infrastructure – above and below ground – and return the site to its original condition. This is our land. It comes back to us.

• **Community consultation.** From our perspective AGL have been open in their communication with neighbours, emailing, door knocking and calling them directly. As well as attending and giving information at every KVCCB meeting available to AGL. The Environmental Impact Statement – expected to be submitted in late 2026 – will be publicly available for community comment through the NSW Planning Portal. That is the formal process, and every resident has the right to participate in it.

An invitation

We are not asking anyone to simply trust us. We are asking the community to stay open-minded. This is a conversation that deserves more than a single perspective.

If you would like to talk – about any of this – our door is genuinely open. Come and see the farm. Ask us your questions directly. We have nothing to hide and everything to share.

Mark and Kristen McLennan have lived in KV since 2004. Mark operates Delicious Gardens and Kristen operates Kangaroo Valley Pastured Eggs.

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

Kerrie Leishman

Painting the beauty between memory and landscape

For Kangaroo Valley artist Kerrie Leishman, painting begins long before the brush touches the canvas. It starts with an idea that quietly takes hold – an imagined landscape, a remembered place or an atmosphere that refuses to leave her mind until it is given form.

Working primarily in oils with wax medium, Kerrie has spent more than three decades developing a practice that explores landscape not simply as a physical place, but as an emotional and psychological one. Her paintings exist a few steps away from reality, inviting viewers into spaces that feel both familiar and imagined.

“I paint landscapes inspired by my imagination or from places, present or past, that I connect to,” Kerrie explains. “If I become obsessed enough with an idea and can see it in my mind’s eye, I challenge myself to paint it.”

What follows is rarely straightforward.

“There is always a battle,” she says. “I win and lose hundreds of times, allowing the work to evolve until I reach a place of resolve.”

For Kerrie, painting is as much about discovery as intention. The most fascinating part of the process, she says, is never quite knowing what determines when a work is finished. Instead, she trusts an inner sense of balance – a personal aesthetic that reveals itself through feeling rather than analysis.

“If someone visits my studio and connects with a painting,” she says, “communication has happened beyond words, and I am humbled.”

Living in Kangaroo Valley continues to shape her work in subtle ways. The ever-changing mist that settles across the Valley has become a particular source of fascination.

“It creates such an atmosphere,” Kerrie says. “It’s constantly transforming – revealing some places while hiding others. It’s both movement and spaciousness within an enclosed valley.”

That fascination with atmosphere reflects a broader philosophy underpinning her work. Kerrie is less interested in documenting a landscape than in capturing something harder to define – its essence, memory and emotional resonance.

“My work is my attempt to express the intangible,” she says. “The fleeting. An essence. A memory. The beauty. It always comes back to the beauty.”

Painting has been part of Kerrie’s life since childhood. She still remembers the delight of drawing on the hallway walls with crayons as a three-year-old. Later, while studying art, her determination to follow her own artistic instincts became clear when she refused to paint the subject her lecturer had assigned – a decision that marked the beginning of her independent artistic journey.

Today, she paints regularly, beginning early before life’s distractions arrive. Once the paint is on the palette and coffee is in hand, hours can pass unnoticed. It is in those moments of complete immersion that she feels most connected to her work.

“I lose myself,” she says. “I’m completely covered in paint and trying to reveal something from the painted surface.”

For more than 20 years, Kerrie has also shared



Image above:
Kerrie Leishman in her studio.

her knowledge by teaching drawing to children, teenagers and adults in her studio. Alongside her own practice, encouraging creativity in others has become an important part of her life as an artist.

Kerrie is currently preparing new works for Arts in the Valley and the Kangaroo Valley Artists Trail and Exhibition in October, while also looking ahead to a portraiture course in Sydney and planning the Kangaroo Valley Archies exhibition in 2027.

Artist Spotlight is a monthly feature of the **Kangaroo Valley Artists Collective**, celebrating the artists shaping the creative life of the Valley. Through conversations, studio visits and personal stories, the series explores the ideas, processes and inspirations behind their work, building an enduring record of the region’s creative community. Artist interviews by Amanda Ritchie.

In conversation

Do you plan your works carefully or allow them to evolve as you go?

I usually begin with a strong vision of what I want to create, but once I start painting, the work takes on a life of its own. It becomes a dialogue between the painting and myself, evolving through many stages until I reach a place of resolution.

What part of the creative process do you enjoy most?

The mystery of it. I’m fascinated by never quite knowing what determines when a painting is finished. It’s an inner knowing driven by a personal aesthetic and a feeling that the work has finally revealed what it needed to say.

When do you feel most connected to your work?

When I’ve completely lost myself in the process. I’m immersed in the painting, covered in paint and trying to reveal something from the surface. Those are the moments when I feel most connected.

What advice would you give someone wanting to start collecting art?

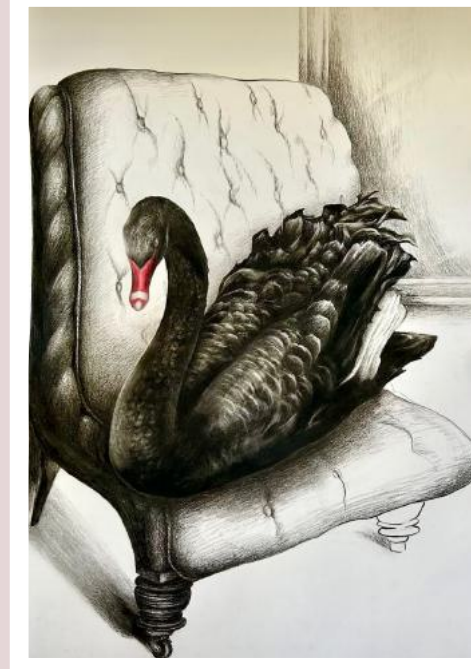
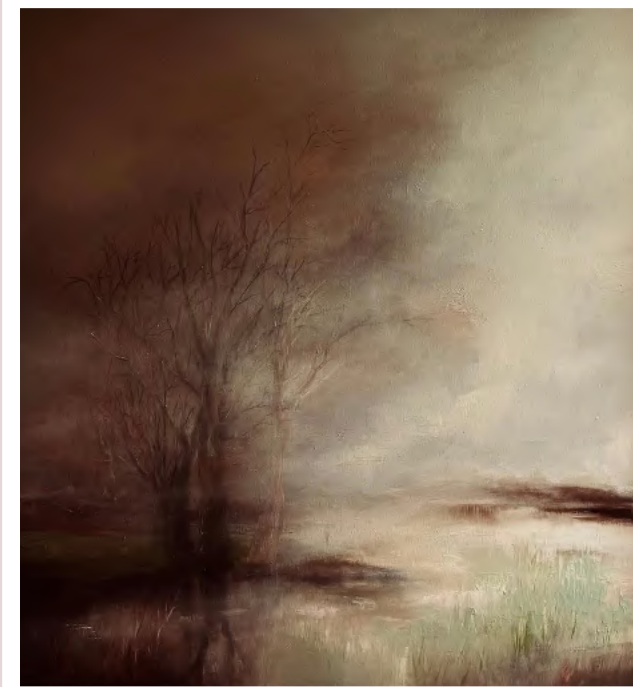
Buy work that genuinely moves you. When a painting continues to draw you back and you can’t stop thinking about it, that’s usually the one to take home. The best collections are built through personal connection rather than trends.



‘Aurora’, 2025, oil on canvas,
50 x 50 cm.

“My work is my attempt to express the intangible – the fleeting, an essence, a memory. It always comes back to the beauty.”

‘Bare Trees’, oil on canvas.



‘Swan’, charcoal.

Quick-fire studio questions

Coffee or tea in the studio?

Coffee in the morning. Tea in the afternoon.

Music, podcasts or silence while working?

A mix of music, silence and podcasts – it depends on the day.

Morning painter or late-night creator?

Morning, afternoon and night. If I’m inspired, I’ll paint whenever I can.

Favourite colour right now?

Pale mushroomy pink.

A tool or material you can’t live without?

Oil paint.

Best creative advice you’ve received?

“Stop overthinking and start throwing paint around.”



AUGUST 8 (4–6pm) Kangaroo Valley Hall \$25



ART & RELIGION: THE FACES OF GOD TALK

A talk by local Kangaroo Valley resident Dr Paul Gwynne which will examine the question *What does God look like?* The answer to this question naturally varies from religion to religion, reflecting both striking differences and surprising similarities.

Paul will discuss the sacred imagery of the Islamic mosque, Jewish synagogue, Christian church, Hindu mandir and Buddhist Temple, each of which powerfully reveals deeper ideas about the nature of divinity.

Join us for this insightful discussion and gain a deeper understanding of the artwork behind the religion.

SEPTEMBER 5 (6–9pm) Kangaroo Valley Hall \$70



Come along for an evening of art inspired games and the opportunity to join in on some creative fun, including portraits of Valley locals! You may even like to have your caricature sketched to capture you for eternity.

Come dressed up as your favourite artist or art-inspired theme. Prizes for the best dressed!

An "Arty Cocktail" on arrival and supper included.

Book your October Long Weekend Workshops Now!

SEPTEMBER 28
(10am – 12pm)
Anglican Church Hall
Kangaroo Valley
FREE WORKSHOP



CHILDREN'S
WORKSHOP
with Annie McCarron
FREE

"Flag and Rainbow Quest" is a free workshop for children aged 6 to 10 years. Create "Kindness Flags" and "Rainbow Headbands" with local artist and Art Therapist, Annie McCarron.

Registration essential.
Places limited to 10.

OCTOBER 3
(10.30am–12.30pm)
Chakola Wildlife Conservation Park
\$60 (adults)
\$30 (children 8–16 years)



CULTURAL WALK
with local language
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Explore significant sites, learn local knowledge and reflect on First Nations people's relationship with the land and waterways. A powerful, immersive experience.

Maximum 30 participants.

OCTOBER 3
(3pm–5.30pm)
Studio Dairy
\$135 (including materials)



LINOCUT
PRINTMAKING
WORKSHOP
with Karen Barker

Learn the techniques of relief printmaking – carve, ink and print your own designs. All materials supplied to produce 1 A5 lino plate, printed up to 5 times, with an option to hand colour.

Maximum 8 participants.

OCTOBER 4
(9am–11am)
Kerrie Leishman's Studio
\$60 (including materials)



MASK
WORKSHOP
with
KERRIE LEISHMAN

Make masks using found natural materials and complete a large charcoal drawing inspired by your mask.

Maximum 20 participants.

OCTOBER 5
(9.30am–11.30am)
Silo Studio & Gallery
\$135 (including materials)



MIXED MEDIA
DRAWING
WORKSHOP
with
ANNE-FRANCE FULGENCE

Experiment with your creativity and imagination under the guidance of a professional practising artist.

Maximum 10 participants.

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In next month's Valley Voice, we will share more information about the events of the long weekend which do not require bookings, including the exhibition of prize finalists, installation art, the Kangaroo Valley Art Trail and activities designed especially for children.

Entries for the
Kangaroo Valley
Art Prize
exhibition, close
August 21.



KVV Book Club

This month's book:

Whistler

by Ann Patchett

This month we review a novel by a similar writer to Elizabeth Strout – Ann Patchett. Her new novel is *Whistler*. Ann Patchett is the author of 10 novels, including *The Dutch House*, *Commonwealth*, *Bel Canto* and *Tom Lake*. She is often on the *New York Times* and *Sunday Times* bestseller lists and she has won the Orange Prize for fiction twice. Patchett lives in Nashville Tennessee and owns a bookshop there.

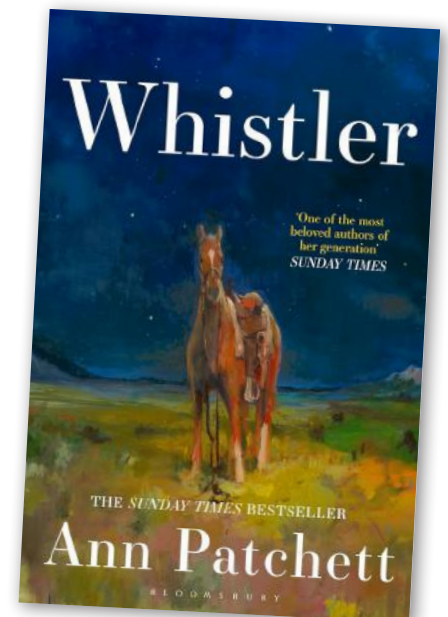
Whistler is essentially the story of the relationship between Daphne Fuller and her favourite former stepfather, Eddie Triplett. Eddie was very briefly married to Daphne's mother but despite Eddie and Daphne's earlier relationship being brief it had a profound impact on both. They shared an event that shaped their lives. Eddie and Daphne have not had any contact for more than 40 years. They randomly meet again in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Daphne is now a high school English teacher. She is happily married to a retired hospital administrator, Jonathan. Eddie is an elderly book editor who never wants to retire. Both are wannabe novelists and book lovers. The novel takes us back to the fateful car accident the winter Daphne turned nine. The book interweaves present day with the shared trauma of the car crash they survived. It explores Daphne and Eddie's reconciliation, renewal of affection and their unbreakable bond.

Eddie is another lovely, caring, adoring and genuine character – very similar to Artie in Strout's *The Things We Never Say*, reviewed last month. *Whistler* is a horse in a special story that Eddie shares with Daphne in the car after the accident. It is a testament to the depth of their connection that Daphne and Eddie still clearly remember the story 40 years after its initial telling.

The novel explores blended and dysfunctional families. All their messy interactions but also deep affection and love. It has a cast of wonderfully portrayed characters with whom Daphne has shared her life. These include: Leda, Daphne's psychologist sister; Abigail, their distant mother; Skip, Eddie's lifelong friend and lover; and Daphne's and Leda's fisherman Dad, Buddy.

This is a quiet, graceful, slowly unfolding story about memory, family, connections and the random events that define our lives. There is no real adrenal fuelled drama here but it is an emotional and profound read. It feels like wrapping yourself in a wonderful, warm blanket hug.



Next month we will have a look at *Yesteryear* – a debut novel by Caro Claire Burke about an Instagram tradwife who wakes up as an actual pioneer wife in 1855.

Cathryn Ferguson

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NAIDOC Screening success

First Nations film event

NAIDOC Week began with a very successful First Nations film event in the KV Community Hall, attended by about 120 people. The goal of Reconciliation Allies KV, who hosted the event, is to develop and share a deeper understanding of Aboriginal history, culture and stories; truth telling to help promote reconciliation.

From the audience response, the films had a powerful impact, with many participants asking how they can be more widely shown.

Some comments from audience members:

A wonderful celebration of NAIDOC in KV, featuring inspiring, humorous and beautifully crafted films that honoured local stories shared across generations of families and kin. The opportunity to yarn with the filmmakers and hear the reflections of the viewers through the reverse Q&A made the experience even more meaningful.

– Lynne Dooley

I found the ‘black’ humour in the film Occupation: Native offers a great way to help us understand the original inhabitants of this land and what they’ve had to endure. It was great to see such a good turnout of Valley people giving us hope that the call of NAIDOC Week is making an impression on all who seek equality and justice.

– Dr Rosemary Stanton OAM

Sunday’s film event was the first time I’ve attended a NAIDOC function and I enjoyed it immensely. The film by Trisha Morton-Thomas (Occupation: Native) was particularly compelling, a wonderful story. It was great to see the Community Hall full, congratulations to all for such a great event.

– John George



Luke McLeod and Sarah Waddell

The films reflected the talent, wisdom, humour and graciousness of First Nations filmmakers who artfully shared stories that reflect the real history of Australia. It was great to see such a crowd and congratulations to Reconciliation Allies who organised a very special event.

– Pam Swinfield

All the films were funny and sad by turn. They were thought provoking and very affecting. The film by the young people from the TIDES film series (Nhandi) was awesome. So much talent. An inspiring afternoon.

– Cathryn Ferguson

I was very taken by the words of George Orwell in Occupation: Native: “The most effective way to destroy people is to deny and obliterate their own understanding of their history.” I appreciated the way in which all three films presented alternatives to the accepted narrative of Australian history. The comedic touches of The Rock and particularly Occupation: Native were great and meant both films avoided being preachy. All in all, a great contribution to an important Kangaroo Valley conversation.

– Helen Lunn

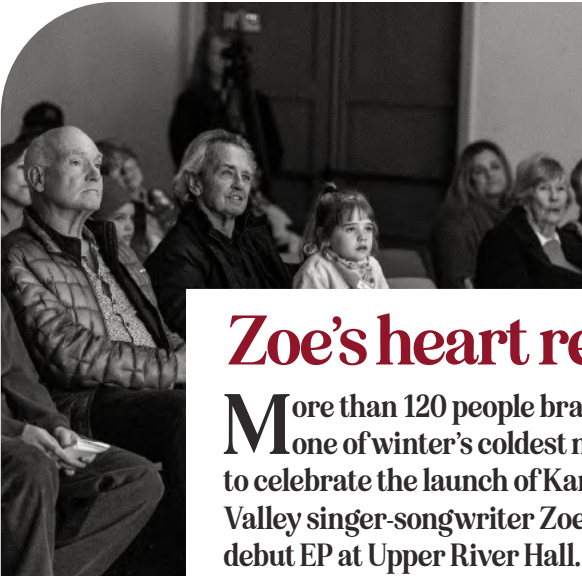


NAIDOC WEEK
50 YEARS DEADLY
5–12 JULY 2026

Thanks to Valley Shorts, the KV Show Committee and Shoalhaven First Nations Film Festival, whose support was integral to the success of the day.

If you would like to know more about Reconciliation Allies KV, please contact allieskv@gmail.com

**Wendy Caird for
Reconciliation Allies KV**



Zoe’s heart remembers

More than 120 people braved one of winter’s coldest nights to celebrate the launch of Kangaroo Valley singer-songwriter Zoe Elliot’s debut EP at Upper River Hall.

“It was freezing outside but such a beautiful night,” she said afterwards. “I’m still on a high. Seeing so many familiar faces, all the children enjoying live local music, and everyone coming together to celebrate – it meant the world to me.”

With the Upper River Preschool feeding the crowd and the hall filled with friends, neighbours and music lovers, the launch became a celebration not just of Zoe’s music, but of the community that helped bring it to life. A fitting beginning for *The Heart Remembers*.

Photography credit: Lisa Grant

Supported by acclaimed musician Paul Greene, local performers and former Kangaroo Valley Show Junior Talent Muster winners Estelle Freney and Daisy Little, the evening was as much a thank you as it was a concert. Between songs, Zoe shared the stories behind her music and expressed her gratitude to the community that has supported her every step of the way.





Our editor's cats, left to right: Scooby and Olive safe at home in the Valley.

Keeping your cat safe and our wildlife safer

If you have ever spotted a 'lost cat' poster on the noticeboard at the Kangaroo Valley General Store, you will know how heartbreaking it is when a beloved pet goes missing. But for many cats, roaming is not just a risk to themselves. In a valley as rich in native wildlife as ours, it can have serious consequences for the creatures we share this land with.

Shoalhaven City Council has been increasingly active on the issue of cat registration, desexing and containment. In a region where an estimated 500 cats over four months old remain unregistered and undesexed, the council has made it clear this is a priority. As Mayor Patricia White put it, undesexed cats that wander can become aggressive, territorial, and a serious threat to native wildlife, and they're also at greater risk of being injured.

For those of us in the Valley, that message hits close to home. Our bushland is habitat for a remarkable range of native animals, from glossy black cockatoos and gang gang cockatoos to eastern pygmy possums, bandicoots and platypus in the Kangaroo River. Nationally, cats are estimated to hunt close to two billion native mammals, birds and reptiles every year, and the impact in biodiverse areas like ours is significant.

The good news is that keeping your cat safe at home is not as difficult as it sounds, and the benefits go both ways. Cats that stay home are protected from car accidents, dog attacks, diseases spread through cat fights such as feline immunodeficiency virus, paralysis ticks, rat bait poisoning and simply getting lost. Fewer than 10 per cent of lost cats in NSW are ever reunited with their owners.

Under the NSW Companion Animals Act, residents with cats over the age of four months are required to desex them or obtain an annual

permit. An annual permit for an undesexed cat costs \$99, while registering a desexed cat costs \$70, or \$35 for Age Pension recipients. Failure to comply may incur a penalty of \$400. Desexing also has the added benefit of reducing roaming behaviour, territorial aggression and unwanted litters.

The RSPCA's Keeping Cats Safe at Home program, which has been running in partnership with councils across NSW including Shoalhaven, has already shown strong results. In its first phase, participating councils saw meaningful reductions in roaming cat populations and thousands of cats were desexed and microchipped. The program has now expanded to 30 councils across the state with a focus on supporting cat owners to create enriching home environments so their pets thrive without needing to roam.

If you are a cat owner in Kangaroo Valley, now is a great time to check that your cat is registered, microchipped and desexed, and to think about how you can make your home and garden a stimulating space for your feline friend. A cat that is engaged, comfortable and safe at home is a happier cat, and a far better neighbour for the wallabies, wrens and bandicoots that make this Valley so special.

For more information on registration requirements, visit the Shoalhaven City Council website or the NSW Pet Registry at nsw.gov.au.

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NOTICE OF ONGOING 1080 BAITING PROGRAM



The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) are conducting an ongoing 1080 baiting program targeting foxes & wild dogs in the Kangaroo Valley, Budgong and Illaroo areas. This program is for the protection of the Endangered Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby (BTRW).

The baiting is conducted on:

- Various private properties
- Shoalhaven City Council reserves
- WaterNSW estate
- Crown Land estate
- NPWS estate, including: Cambewarra Range NR, Kangaroo River NR, Morton NP & Budgong NP

For more information on these locations, see the maps hosted on the Friends website at www.rockwallaby.org.au under 'Predator Control'.

This program forms part of a wider predator control program that also utilises shooting and trapping measures critical in ensuring the conservation

of the local BTRW colonies that call Kangaroo Valley home.

All bait stations in this program are permanently baited throughout the year. Therefore, these properties will have poison on them from 01-August-2026, right through to 15-August-2027.

This baiting will be conducted using both 1080 buried baits and 1080 (above ground) ejector devices at the bait station locations. Do not touch any bait or ejector devices. Signs are placed at the entrance of each baiting location with baiting dates and which baiting methods are being used. Dog owners are reminded to ensure their pets do not wander. 1080 is lethal to domestic dogs and cats. It is recommended to restrain pets and working dogs and ensure they do not enter the baiting location during poisoning operations or to muzzle dogs if they are required to work the baiting location during and after poisoning. In the event of accidental poisoning seek immediate veterinary assistance.

For any further information, or if you are a landholder interested in participating in this program, please contact the NPWS Nowra Area Office on (02) 9585 6670.

No citrus left behind

Festival certainly no lemon – only

By the time this issue of the Voice lands in your letterbox, Citrus Fest will be under way – or perhaps already wrapping up. If you're reading this on the first weekend of August and wondering if you can still join in, don't assume you've missed out! Some events may still have seats available, so it's worth checking the latest program and bookings.

The idea behind Citrus Fest is wonderfully simple. Every winter, backyard trees and orchards across the Valley produce an abundance of citrus, with far more fruit than most households can use. Rather than watching it fall to the ground, local chef, permaculturist and food sustainability advocate **Angie Prendergast-Sceats** has brought together growers, cooks, makers and curious minds to celebrate the season while sharing the skills to make the most of this incredible local harvest.

Across the weekend there are orchard tours, preserving workshops, family activities, shared meals, cocktails, trivia and plenty of

opportunities to swap ideas, recipes and stories.

Angie has generously shared a couple of favourite citrus recipes to inspire your own kitchen. We hope they encourage you to pick a few limes, oranges and lemons, gather family and friends, and keep the spirit of Citrus Fest alive long after the last orange has been picked.



Scan QR code for more information or last minute tickets.

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Lemon Curd

Makes approximately 500 mL of silky, tangy lemon curd (about two standard jars)

Ingredients

6 large eggs
2 egg yolks
180 g caster sugar
150 mL freshly squeezed lemon juice (about 3–4 lemons)
Finely grated zest of 3 lemons
Pinch of salt
125 g unsalted butter, diced

Method

In a heavy base pot, whisk together the eggs, yolks, sugar, lemon juice, zest and salt until well combined.

Place the bowl over a low heat.

Stir constantly with a silicone spatula or whisk for 8–12 minutes until the mixture thickens enough to coat the back of a spoon. It should reach around 82–84°C if using a thermometer. Don't walk away from the pot!

Remove from the heat and whisk in the butter a few cubes at a time until completely melted and smooth.

Pour into sterilised jars, then refrigerate.

Yield

Approximately 500 mL (about 520–550 g, depending on the size of your eggs).

Storage

Refrigerate for up to 2 weeks.

Freeze for up to 3 months.



Chef's tip

For a strong lemon tang, rub the sugar into the zest before cooking.

Avgolemeono Soup

(Greek Lemon Chicken Soup)

Serves: 6–8

A comforting Greek soup made with chicken, rice and a silky egg and lemon sauce. The secret is tempering the eggs so they don't scramble.

Ingredients

Soup

2 tbsp olive oil
1 brown onion, finely diced
2 celery stalks, finely diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 L good quality chicken stock
1 bay leaf
100 g arborio or medium-grain rice (or orzo)
400 g cooked shredded chicken (roast or poached)
2 tbsp chopped dill
2 tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley
Salt and freshly cracked black pepper

Avgolemeono

3 large eggs

120 mL fresh lemon juice (2–3 lemons)

Finely grated zest of 1 lemon (optional, for extra brightness)

Method

Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onion and celery and cook for about 8 minutes until softened but not coloured. Add the garlic and cook for another minute.

Pour in the chicken stock and add the bay leaf. Bring to a simmer.

Stir in the rice and cook for 15–18 minutes or until tender.

Add the shredded chicken and warm through. Remove the bay leaf. Stir through the chopped herbs.

Make the Avgolemeono

In a large bowl whisk the eggs until well combined.



Gradually whisk in the lemon juice.

Slowly ladle about 500 mL of the hot broth into the egg mixture while whisking constantly. This tempers the eggs and prevents curdling.

Remove the soup pot from the heat.

Slowly pour the egg mixture back into the soup while stirring continuously.

Return to very low heat for 2–3 minutes, stirring gently. **Do not let the soup boil** after adding the eggs, or it may split. Taste and adjust the seasoning with salt, pepper and a little more lemon juice if desired.

Serve with warm crusty sourdough, grilled pita or buttered toasted bread.

GOLF

Come rain or shine, a round of golf is always a winner.

Saturday 20 June was a Stableford round. Congratulations to Lan Thomas with 31 points, followed by Ronnie Touma with 30 points, beating Allan Harvey on a countback with 30 points as well.

Saturday 27 June was our Stroke and Monthly Medal round, with the course in great condition. Congratulations to Ian Thomas with an impressive 75, winning both the Stroke and Monthly Medal rounds, followed by Stephen Atkins with 78 and Chris McVeigh with 82.

Saturday 4 July was our Stableford round – a wet round that was reflected in the results. However, the upside was we had an impressive number of members and visitors playing on the weekend. Congratulations to Christopher Griffin with 33 points, followed by Ian Thomas with 29 points and Ronne Touma, beaten

on countback with 29 points as well.

Saturday 11 July was our Par round – a very wet and heavy fog round. Again, we welcomed an impressive number of visitors for the round. Congratulations to Michael Elkadi, visitor from Riverside Oaks Golf Club, with -1, ahead of Rabeah Touma, another visitor from Riverside Oaks, with -2, followed by Warren Davis, visitor from Moss Vale Golf Club, with a -5.

The **2025–26 Kangaroo Valley GC Match Play competition** is now down to the final four players: Christopher Griffin, Suzanne Greer, Eric Felipe and Ruth Keaney. Good luck to you all.

Happy golfing everyone! Stay safe and until next time ...

Allan Harvey, KVGC Captain

“I have a tip that can take five strokes of anyone’s game. It’s called an eraser.”
– Arnold Palmer

Fog on the Par 3, 14th hole

Kangaroos on the 16th fairway



MEN'S BOWLS REPORT

Challenge Pairs

In the second game of the first round of the Challenge Pairs competition, Bob Burney and Jim McKinley started on a score of 10 points against Ron Nelson and Darryl Goodger who started on 0 points. The early part of the game was dominated by Bob and Jim and they held a 23 to 4 point lead at completion of the eighth end. Thereafter, Ron and Darryl scored consistently, including two fours and a five, to finish the game only four points down. The final score was 29 points to 25 in favour of Bob and Jim but Ron and Darryl can take some comfort from the fact that they would have won the match by 6 points had it not been for the extravagant 10 point start, awarded to their opposition.

Bob Dunn and Keith Pepper will have to give Bob and Jim a seven point start when they meet in the second round of the competition.

Mixed Pairs

Both semifinals of the Mixed Pairs competition were held on **18 July**. Margaret and Terry Hayes won convincingly against Greg Williams and Judy Croft. In another one-sided affair, Deb and I played against Derek Raymond and Frances Simmonds. Derek and Frances dominated the match from the outset and held a 16 point to 1 lead at the halfway mark. Whilst Deb and I played better over the last 11 ends, it wasn't enough to halt Derek and Frances, who won the match by 22 points to 13.

SOCIAL BOWLS

10 June – Bob Dunn and Frank Piccolini 33 – Ron Nelson and Steve Kellett 18. Bob Burnie and 'Tige' Lidbetter 20 – Brian Jones and Bill Chittick 17.

13 June – Frank Piccolini and Jim Abbott 21 – Bob Dunn and Terry Hayes 15.

Cut-throat – Mark Power 20, Tige Lidbetter 8, 'Jingles' Chittick 7.

17 June – Darryl Goodger and Terry Hayes 35 – Jimmy Whyte and Jingles Chittick 18. Ron Nelson and David Badger 33 – Frank Piccolini and Bill Chittick 17. Daniel White and Teeny Fitzgerald 27 – Brian Jones and Tige Lidbetter 23.

1 July – 'Skippy' Chittick and Frank Piccolini 24 – Kejian Yu and Tige Lidbetter 17. Mark Power and Terry Hayes 27 – Rob Folkard and Teeny Fitzgerald 19. Derek Raymond and Jim Abbott 25 – Laurie Watson and Bill Chittick 23. **Cut-throat consistency** – Steve Kellett 71, Keith Pepper 61, Brian Jones 55.

12 July – Loral Ferrington and Jingles Chittick 24 – Bob Burney and Teeny Fitzgerald 18. Derek Raymond and Steve Kellett 24 – Gillian Portener and Mark Power 23. Judy Croft and Adam Rigney 22 – Margaret and Terry Hayes 17.

Rob Folkard

LADIES' BOWLS REPORT

Semifinal Major Triples

Just a quick reminder of where we were up to in the last issue with the Major Triples. It was the match between Rosa Burns, Cathy Cole-Clark and Jane Haddon against Loral Ferrington (KV), Ruth Willdig and Gillian Portener (KV).

It was the last end and Gillian's team had drawn the game, forcing an extra end! Excitingly, Gillian was holding the shot and therefore the win until Jane's last bowl took the shot and the match, winning 24 to 23. I can now report Jane's team

went on to win the final of this competition 24 to 14. Congratulations to all who participated in this championship.

That is all for the Ladies this year. The Men's and Ladies' mixed presentation night will be held on **8 August**. Rob and I look forward to reporting on the results.

Happy bowling.

Deb Folkard





News from the Pews

Church of the Good Shepherd Kangaroo Valley

At church we've been talking about hope. I don't know about you, but doesn't our society feel like it's lacking hope at the moment?

There are so many things that are challenging for our wider society at the moment. Higher prices for many things, incoming technologies that threaten the job security of many and the environment, world conflicts, housing affordability – these things erode our hope. I have four children, and at times I quietly worry what the future holds for them. Do you feel like this about the future sometimes?

At church we've been looking at what the Bible

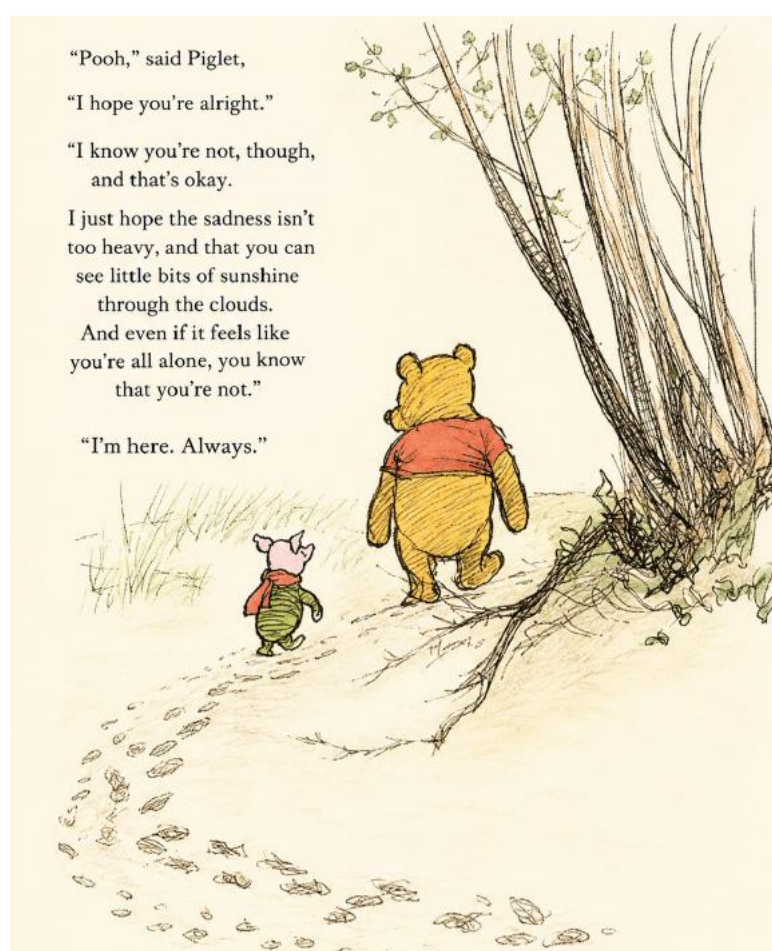
says about this kind of worry and anxiety. In Romans 15:13 the apostle Paul says to his readers, 'May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit'. In other words, as you entrust God for the direction your life and heart takes, God promises he will give you an abundance of hope, more than you ever thought you could ever have.

What a great promise, and as someone who has taken up that offer myself, I can assure you God fulfils his promises. If you ever want to have a chat about hope, please give me a call or catch up with me one Sunday morning.

God bless you all
Andrew Paterson



May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.



"Pooh," said Piglet,

"I hope you're alright."

"I know you're not, though, and that's okay."

I just hope the sadness isn't too heavy, and that you can see little bits of sunshine through the clouds.

And even if it feels like you're all alone, you know that you're not."

"I'm here. Always."



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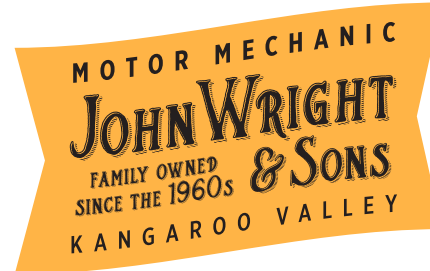
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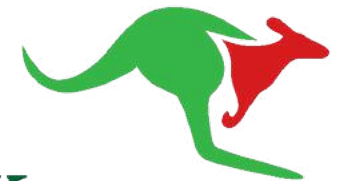
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P&C President | Ben Williams
Preschool | Gemma Corner 4465 1327
Public School | Jen Arnott 4465 1182
Scots College | Tony Banks 4465 1089
Sunday School | Cecily Paterson 4465 1585

CHARITIES AND SERVICE GROUPS

CMR Institute | Joan Bray 0401 211 595
Environment | Greg Thompson 0473 114 026
KV East Timor Friendship Group | Sandy Fritz 0478 113 093
Lions Club | David Loncasty 0418 596 022
Wildlife Rescue | South Coast 0418 427 214
**Wildlife Information, Rescue
& Education Service (WIRES)** 1300 094 737

SPORTS AND EXERCISE

Bowls | Rob Folkard 4465 2889
Cricket Club | Hugh Sinclair 0435 001 294
Fishing Club | Harold Sharman 4465 1140
Frisbee | Mark McLennan 0439 456 356
Golf Club | Allan Harvey 4465 0200
Hockey Club | Sharon Gomez 4465 1580
Iyengar Yoga | Rose Andrews 4465 1364
KV Football Club | Dean Mackechnie 0416 077 658
Kangaroo Valley Gym | Michael Hole 0432 177 206
Pilates | Melinda Mangold 0404 483 680
Strawbale Yoga Studio | Kate Pell 0432 598 582
Table Tennis | Lorraine Mairinger 0427 297 238
Taichi classes & Acupuncture | Sue Cochrane 0408 510 151
Tennis Club | Peter Stanton 4465 1688
Yoga | Vasudha Rao 0431 514 600
Yoga | Kate Pell 0432 598 582

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Arts In The Valley | Nikki Sharp 0467 209 819
Brogers Creek Landcare | Andrew FitzSimons 4465 1482
Budgong Community Group | Alex Cooke 0418 440 526
Chamber of Tourism & Commerce | Lindy Pitt 4465 1693

Community Consultative

Body Kvccb@Kangaroovalley.nsw.au
Cuppas & Kids | Lisa Grant 0431 037 378
FIG Community Garden | Lyn Rutherford 0414 737 547
Historical Society | Garth Chittick 0419 651 611
KV Art Therapy | Sally Thomson 0493 050 516
KV Fire Station | 4465 1718
KVRFS Captain | Dusty Smart 0412 865 638
KV Show | Mairi Langton 0412 180 778
Osbourne Park Showground | Dave Kent 0407 209 491
Pioneer Museum | Tony Barnett 4465 1800
Resilient KV | Cathy Gorman 0438 651 540
..... resilientkangaroovalley@gmail.com
Rock-Wallaby | Melinda Norton 4887 8256
Shoalhaven Fire Control Centre 02 4424 4424
Upper River Progress Assn | Gary Moore 0421 050 348
Upper River Hall UpperRiverHall@Gmail.com

COMMUNITY SERVICES

**Bus Service To Nowra
and Highlands** Mon – Fri – 4421 7596 or 1300 133 477

SPORTS AND EXERCISE

WEEKLY

Iyenga Yoga Tues 10–12am & 6–8pm
Kate Pell Yoga Tues, Thurs & Sundays
Iyenga Yoga Thurs 9am & 6pm
Table Tennis | KV Hall Wed 3 – 5pm

COMMUNITY GROUPS & SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

WEEKLY

Women’s Bible Study | Anglican Hall Mon 1–3pm
Cuppa & Kids | Anglican Hall Tues 9–30am
KVRFS Training at Station Wed 6pm
After School Kids’ Club | Anglican Hall Thu 3.20–4.30pm
FIG Community Garden Thurs 10am–12pm
Women’s Care & Share | Anglican Hall Thurs 12–2pm
Anglican Church | Traditional Service Sun 8.30am
Contemporary Service and Sunday School Sun 10am
Mass | St. Joseph’s Tue–Thur 9–9:30am and Sun 11am

MONTHLY

A & H Meeting | KV Hall Mon (2nd) 6pm
KV Rural Fire Val Meeting Mon (1st) 7pm
KV Historical Society Contact Tues (2nd) 10am
Trivia At The Friendly Inn Tues (2nd) 7pm
Lions Club Meeting Tues (4th)
Brogers Creek Landcare Sat (Last)
KV Farmers Markets Sun (2nd)
Fishing Club Competition Day Sun (Last)

BI-MONTHLY

Men’s Group Friday: (1st & 3rd) 7.30 am
..... Contact Bob Dunn 0429 399 609

Group secretaries please check and update contact details if necessary | thevoice@kangaroovalley.nsw.au
Please email all content for inclusion in the Voice to thevoice@kangaroovalley.nsw.au

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