FREE

The Kangaroo Valley Voice

MAY 2026

Varroa in the Valley

Keeping our beekeepers busy

KAYAKING ADVENTURE
Paddling across the Bass Strait
page 11

STORIES ON THE WALLS
Art reflects culture at SHS
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BACKYARD CHOOKS
What is the perfect chicken?
page 14

The Kangaroo Valley Voice

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 June issue is 18 May 2026. Please send to: thevoice@kangaroovalley.nsw.au

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Welcome

If this issue of the *Voice* arrives a little later than usual, please excuse us.

With ANZAC Day falling late in the month, along with a Monday public holiday, our print deadline has been pushed to ensure we could include this important moment — one that brings our community together to honour those who have served.

In reflecting on this issue, what stands out is how deeply this community is built on service — and continues to be. Almost every page offers evidence of people giving their time and energy to maintain, build and care for this place — its land, its people and its animals.

It feels timely, then, that May marks National Volunteers Week. At the heart of Kangaroo Valley is a culture of contribution — offered in countless ways, often without fanfare. It's easy to see it as simply "what we do". Yet visitors regularly remark that within these pages — in the stories, the images and the events — they sense something more: a genuine togetherness that underpins it all.

Aren't we lucky.

If you would like to send a submission for our next issue please email thevoice@kangaroovalley.nsw.au

Cover: Dedicated beekeepers such as Virginia Mumford are helping to save the local bee population.
Photo: Sue Williamson

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PLUS our regular features from around the Valley

Anzac Day 2026

Kangaroo Valley residents and visitors quietly gathered for the 10.00am ANZAC Day service, standing with communities across the nation to honour the sacrifices of servicemen, women and animals who have served, and continue to serve Australia and New Zealand.

Hundreds assembled in solemn unity, filling the village as a stretch of Moss Vale Road was temporarily closed for the 2026 commemorations.

Master of ceremonies Lance Brown opened proceedings, inviting all present to reflect and pay their respects. As the service began, the stillness was broken by the steady thrum of helicopters overhead. Emerging through the low, fog-laden clouds, three Royal Australian Navy MH-60R Seahawks swept across the sky with precise timing, their commanding presence both striking and deeply fitting for the occasion.

From a distance, the congregation watched as Captain Tony Aldred CSC, RAN, led the march along the main road, accompanied by an immaculate catafalque party from HMAS Albatross. Veterans, current servicemen and women, their families, local school children and community members marched together in a moving display of unity and remembrance.

The ceremony opened with a moving Welcome to Country by proud Yuin man Uncle Gerry Moore OAM, who reminded those gathered that they stood on Wodi Wodi and Dharawal Country, where Aboriginal people have gathered for millennia to honour their ancestors – just as the community had come together to honour those who served before us.

Uncle Gerry reflected on the many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men, and later women, who answered the call to serve – driven both by love of country and the hope of being treated as equals for the first time. He shared the story of proud Yuin man Private Frank Sinclair from Kangaroo Valley, one of 11 Aboriginal men who enlisted for the Boer War, and acknowledged the many First Nations people who served in every conflict despite significant barriers, often returning home to the same discrimination they had left behind.

His words created a powerful foundation for the service and echoed strongly with this year's commemorative address by Commodore Fiona McNaught RAN, representing the Chief of Navy, whose theme was 'Women in Service'.

Commodore McNaught reflected on the long and often under-recognised contribution of women to Australia's defence story – from more than 2000 nurses who served in the First World War, to the thousands of women who volunteered in communications, intelligence and logistics during the Second World War, and the generations of women who now serve across every part of the Australian Defence Force.

Together, both speakers reminded the community that the ANZAC legacy belongs to all who served – men and women, First Nations and non-Indigenous Australians alike – and that remembrance must continue to grow to fully honour every story.

Kangaroo Valley's acclaimed

Uncle Gerry Moore

Private Frank Sinclair

opera singer Lorina Gore delivered a beautiful rendition of the ANZAC hymn *The Recessional*, her voice carrying through the still morning air.

Prayers for the King and national leaders were offered by Reverend Andrew Paterson of the Kangaroo Valley Church of the Good Shepherd, followed by prayers for the nation, written by Father Ronan of the Kangaroo Valley Catholic Church and delivered by Julie Mairinger.

Following the commemorative address, Captain Aldred delivered a prayer in honour of those who have fallen in war.

The haunting sound of bagpipes then filled the Valley as respected local piper Roger Chapman played with grace and strength. His music lingered in the lifting morning fog, underscoring the solemnity of the moment.

Members of the community were invited forward, one by one, to lay wreaths. Long-time resident Derek Lucas laid the first on behalf of the Kangaroo Valley community, followed by visiting dignitaries and local organisations.

The *Ode* was recited by Kangaroo Valley Public School student William Apps, leading into a moving rendition of *Abide With Me*, again by Lorina Gore. The poem *Sir* was then delivered with pride by fellow KVPS student Ruby Minchin. All KVPS students then added their voices to the service, singing *Lest We Forget* and *Flanders Field* in gentle harmony.

Lorina Gore returned to perform *God Save The King*, followed by Paul Smith's soulful rendition of the New Zealand national anthem in both Māori and English. Once again, Gore led the crowd in Australia's national anthem, *Advance Australia Fair*, as the community joined together in song.

Before closing, Captain Aldred acknowledged the contribution of 725 Squadron HMAS Albatross and the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society (HARS) for their aircraft flyovers. He also expressed gratitude for the dedicated volunteers of the Kangaroo Valley ANZAC Day Committee, with special recognition given to Joan Bray for her tireless leadership over nearly three decades.

The service concluded with the presentation of the prestigious James Bray Memorial Award, awarded this year to Year 6 KVPS student Hazel Grant in recognition of her honesty, leadership and kindness.

As always, the Kangaroo Valley Lions Club provided hot sausage sandwiches and refreshments, offering warmth and community after a deeply meaningful morning.

They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old. Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning. We will remember them.

Lest we forget.

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What might a BESS look like?

Following last month's submission from Sarah Cassimaty regarding the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) in Kangaroo Valley, residents have been seeking a visual representation of what such a facility might look like.

To date, AGL has not provided an image of the proposed development.

In response, local resident Kate Rutherford has researched and supplied this image of a BESS installation in Glenrowan, Victoria, understood to be of a comparable scale to that proposed for Kangaroo Valley.

It is provided here as a general reference point only.

This concerned group has started a petition and ask that you consider adding your name to it via the QR code.

Glenrowan BESS 400MW / 1600 MWh

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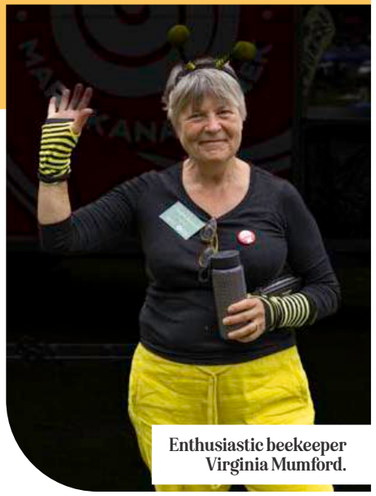
When the bees changed

Varroa, vigilance and the Valley's thriving beekeeping community



Enthusiastic beekeeper Virginia Mumford.

I was sitting outside the General Café, finishing up another meeting, when Virginia Mumford came bounding across from the post office, a tightly wrapped parcel in hand and energy to match.

She barely paused before ducking inside to order a coffee, returning almost immediately, already mid-story – she'd been waiting for this package.

There was something Christmas morning about it. Layers of tape gave way slowly as she laughed about half-expecting it to be an online scam. But what emerged was exactly what she'd hoped for: a large educational model of a beehive, complete with cells, brood and bees in various stages of development.

Virginia was delighted.

"This is exactly what I wanted," she said, turning pieces over in her hands. "You can actually show people what's going on inside the hive … otherwise it's all hidden."

There was a large varroa mite, exaggerated for demonstration, and another to scale – tiny against the body of a bee. She pointed out the difference with the same enthusiasm she would later bring to explaining pollination, hive strength and the changing nature of beekeeping.

It's hard not to be swept up in Virginia's energy. She carries it with her – quick, curious, generous – and it extends well beyond her own hives. If anything, she resists the spotlight, quick to point instead to others across the Valley who share the same commitment.

Monique Maul, co-owner of the General Café where we sat, has more than 10 hives. Next door in the General Store, Mark Schwegler has had up to 70 – and there are many others, all part of the same local ecosystem of growers, producers and community. That feels particularly important now.

Mite is wrong

The arrival of varroa mite has fundamentally changed beekeeping across Australia, including here in Kangaroo Valley and the Shoalhaven. What was once a relatively stable and rewarding practice has become more demanding, more uncertain and, at times, confronting.

"With varroa, all the feral hives … they're all dying out," Virginia said. "They were scattered through forests and everywhere, and now they're just not there to the same extent."

Those unmanaged colonies once contributed inconspicuously but significantly to pollination. Their loss is not always obvious but it is increasingly being felt.

"People don't necessarily realise what's changed," she said. "They just see that things aren't pollinating the way they used to … but those bees were doing a lot of the work in the background. It's happening right now, in front of us."

For managed hives, the shift has been more immediate. "The main trouble is, if all your bees have had varroa in the cell, they're just not as strong," she said. "They can't forage as well, they're not as communicative … everything just sort of dampens down."

What follows is a different kind of beekeeping – one that requires closer observation, more intervention and a willingness to keep adapting.

Virginia came to it relatively recently, undertaking training through the NSW Department of Primary Industries at Tocal before joining the Shoalhaven Beekeepers Club. But she brings with her what she describes as a habit of "deep scientific research" – an approach shaped by a career spanning medicine, finance and health economics.

It shows in the way she works – observing closely, testing and responding to what the hive reveals. "You just keep learning," she said. "You realise quite quickly that you don't ever completely know what's going on – you're always responding to what's in front of you."

That learning does not happen in isolation.

Shared responsibility

Across the Valley, a network of beekeepers share knowledge and support one another. Informal monthly gatherings at The Friendly Inn, pioneered by George and Karen Fallah, bring the group together on the third Thursday of each month. "It's really helpful just to talk it through," Virginia said. "What someone else is seeing, what's working, what's not."

That sense of shared responsibility is becoming increasingly important. With fewer feral hives in the landscape, pollination can no longer be taken for granted. One emerging model is more collaborative – placing hives across multiple properties, from orchards to gardens, rather than keeping them in a single location.

"If people don't have time to keep bees themselves, it may be about connecting with someone who does," Virginia said. "Having hives on a property can make a real difference to pollination."

> *"With varroa, all the feral hives … they're all dying out."*

For some, this also opens a modest economic opportunity – hives placed where they are needed, supporting growers while helping offset the cost and labour of maintaining healthy colonies. "It's not about big-scale movement," she said. "It's more about smaller numbers of hives, properly looked after, and placed where they can do the most good."

Closer to home, ideas like this are already being explored and include a focus on native stingless bees in schools and community gardens, in addition to hosting shared European honey bee hives. The FIG Community Garden has been identified as one possible site for a shared hive, although, as Virginia noted, the practicalities matter.

"It always comes back to who's responsible for the hive," she said. "Who's checking it, who's managing it."

Alongside all of this runs Virginia's commitment to education.

Bee prepared

For the past two years, Virginia has led an 'All About Bees' program for children at the KV Show's Kids' Day – arriving dressed as a bee, guiding candle-making activities and answering an endless stream of questions.

Through her work with children, she has seen how quickly curiosity takes hold – the moment when something hidden becomes visible, and interest follows. "Once they see it, they're completely engaged," she said.

Despite the challenges, her outlook remains steady. "We're starting to understand it better," she said. "What works here, what doesn't … and that makes it feel more manageable."

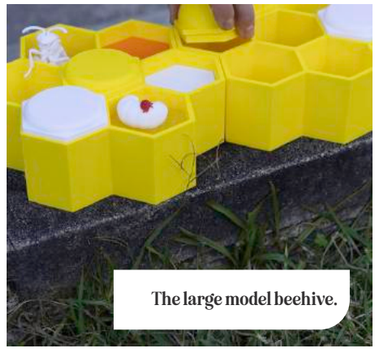
By the time we finished talking, the café had long since closed. Chairs were stacked, but we remained at the table, conversation stretching well past the end of the day. Out front, shelves of bread, jams and honey remained – an honesty system still in place.

With Virginia's words in mind, I remembered the unusual $20 note in my purse and picked up a jar of Mon's honey. The note slipped into the box. Worth every cent. It will be a birthday gift for my grandson, who has recently discovered Winnie-the-Pooh and his love of 'hunny'.

A small, sweet reminder that behind even the simplest things – a spoonful of honey, a flowering tree – is a system under pressure, and a passionate community working to sustain it for this and future generations.

Julie Ward

The tiny varroa mite is an external parasite.



The large model beehive.

World Bee Day – why it matters

On 20 May each year

World Bee Day is a global reminder of the essential role bees and other pollinators play in our ecosystems, food production and biodiversity.

Around one-third of the food we eat depends on pollination – from fruits and vegetables to nuts, seeds and coffee. Bees are among the most effective of these pollinators.

In Australia, both European honey bees and native bees contribute to this work. While native bees are not affected by varroa mite, European honey bees play a critical role in large-scale pollination and local food production.

The arrival of varroa mite has placed increased pressure on managed hives and has reduced feral bee populations, making the role of local beekeepers more important than ever.

What can you do?

- Plant bee-friendly flowers that bloom across seasons.
- Avoid spraying pesticides, especially during flowering.
- Support local beekeepers by buying local honey.
- Consider hosting a hive or learning more about beekeeping.

A small awareness can make a meaningful difference – for bees and for the systems that depend on them.

Sarah Waddell and Wendy Caid at Shoalhaven High School.

Stories that stay on the walls

Following the success of *Stories of Place* at this year's Kangaroo Valley Show, the Reconciliation Allies Kangaroo Valley – led by Sarah Waddell and Wendy Caird – received a generous invitation.

Aunty Pat Lester and Year 12 Aboriginal Studies students at Shoalhaven High School welcomed a small group to visit and experience the school's murals first-hand. In attendance were Sarah and Wendy, Andrew FitzSimons, Helen Lunn and myself.

We had been sent a paper ahead of the visit – *Murals of Shoalhaven High School (1988–2025)* by Aunty Pat Lester and Peter Botsman – but nothing quite prepared us for what we encountered.

This was not simply a school. It was a living cultural space.

For more than 30 years, Aunty Pat Lester has helped shape Aboriginal education at Shoalhaven High. That work lives not just in classrooms, but across walls, corridors and buildings throughout the school.

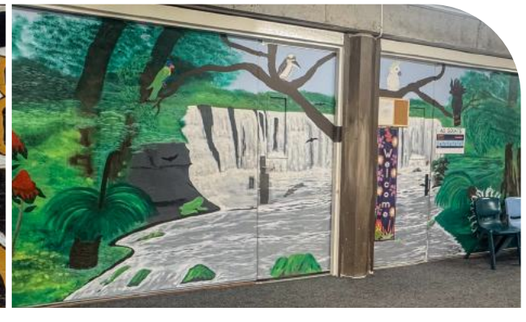
The murals are not decorative. They are story, memory and identity.

Beginning in the late 1980s, alongside the introduction of Aboriginal Studies in NSW schools, they form a visual record of culture, Country and community. Created by students, visiting artists and Elders, they reflect continuity and change – holding stories of pride, connection and resilience, while also acknowledging more difficult histories.

What becomes clear is that this is not art set apart from daily life. It is lived. For students, these works are part of the everyday – carrying culture, connection and, for some, family history.

We left with a deep appreciation of what has been built here over decades – and the care, relationships and commitment that continue to sustain it.

Julie Ward



Reflections from those who attended capture the experience in their own words.

Delighted members of the Reconciliation Allies Kangaroo Valley were warmly welcomed on our recent visit to Shoalhaven High School, where we had been invited to view the more than 30 murals that dot the campus. Aunty Pat Lester, a steadfast servant of reconciliation within the Shoalhaven for more than 30 years, was on hand, with the school's proud record of engaging Indigenous students and their families in learning and culture on full display.

The positive impact of the visual arts on our appreciation of Indigenous culture inspired and enthralled. This decades-long endeavour is truly a national treasure – almost overwhelming.

Aunty Pat led us through – chatting, explaining, introducing – tiny details alongside big-picture storytelling. The art is a lively conduit for RAKV members to grow our understanding.

Principal Damien Lester, along with students and staff, ensured we left with absolutely no doubt about the positive impact of the work being done (not to mention the delicious lunch prepared by SHS Hospitality students).

Group members have been in discussion ever since – ideas abound as to how we might deepen our engagement with this fine school. A mural or two at the KV Showground, perhaps? Further suggestions appreciated.

Andrew FitzSimons

What a fabulous morning. Not only were the large murals stunning, but what impressed me most was how art – particularly Aboriginal art – was integrated across the entire school.

It wasn't confined to the Art department, but present everywhere: large hall panels, doorways, classroom walls, behind bubblers and even throughout the girls' toilets. There was a clear pride in Aboriginal culture, and in artistic expression more broadly.

My first takeaway, as Director of Visual Arts in the Valley for 2026, is the opportunity to encourage and support young and emerging artists such as these Shoalhaven High students to participate.

Another was a reminder of the extraordinary contribution of people like Aunty Pat Lester. Beyond individual support, she provides continuity – over 30 years – with the school and community. She noted that some current students are children and grandchildren of those she has known. What an amazing legacy.

Helen Lunn

We were thrilled to be invited by Aunty Pat Lester to see these artworks, which have been gradually added to the walls of the school over several decades.

They include works by students as well as well known artists. We were struck by the creativity and imagination on display, and are very grateful to have gained a deeper understanding of the history of Shoalhaven High School, along with the perspectives and priorities of its community today.

Sarah Waddell

It was a great privilege to be invited to see the murals at Shoalhaven High School.

I particularly valued learning about the local and traditional stories depicted by Aboriginal artists – both students and Artists in Residence. The experience felt very different from viewing art in a gallery, as the murals are so closely connected to the school in which they live.

For students, this represents a daily experience of Aboriginal culture, and for some, a direct connection to family members who have contributed to the works. I hope these artworks continue to be valued and protected so they can bring connection and meaning for generations to come.

Wendy Caird

Andrew FitzSimons and Aunty Pat Lester at Shoalhaven High School.

National Reconciliation Week – 27 May – 3 June

ALL IN

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK 2026
27 MAY — 3 JUNE

National Reconciliation Week is a time for all Australians to reflect on our shared history – and to consider how we move forward together.

The dates mark two significant milestones: the 1967 referendum and the 1992 Mabo decision, both pivotal moments in recognising the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Across the Shoalhaven, the week is often marked through community events, cultural activities and opportunities to learn more about First Nations histories and perspectives. Local councils, schools and community groups typically share programs closer to the time.

While it may not always arrive with fanfare, the week offers a simple invitation – to pause, to listen and to deepen understanding.

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The Strait Crackers

Getting to Tassie the not-so-easy way

Are you ready? This is the question I had asked of myself and our team many times but it was never as real and confrontational as when we got up in the dark and pushed our kayaks off from mainland Australia headed for the open ocean and an island chain that would hopefully deliver us safely all the way to Tasmania.

After two years of planning, training and preparation, it was early February 2026 when our group, 'The Strait Crackers', seized upon a good weather window and decided to go for it. We loaded all of our gear into the car, strapped three boats on the roof, picked up a team member from Canberra airport and then drove the 10 hours to Port Welshpool to begin our journey.

The initial inspiration came in early 2024 from listening to a podcast of some guys who had tackled the Bass Strait after being relatively new to sea kayaking. I thought to myself what a fantastic challenge and adventure. The Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race is seen as an epic, so to paddle Bass Strait in a kayak was next level – it has been referred to as the 'Everest of the Sea'. I managed to purchase my boat from one of the guys in that podcast and then started my recruitment drive.

> *It was a satisfying feeling to be under way with an outgoing tide as the sun rose and the moon faded away.*

This became quite a challenge that involved a few false starts. Plenty of my friends were keen but when it came to the training days and commitment, most people faltered. One potential partner smashed his sea kayak in the surf at Shoalhaven Heads, one deserted the group and had us ready to call in a rescue on a training paddle and the others left for overseas. It took nearly 12 months to finally get a solid team who all shared the same objectives.

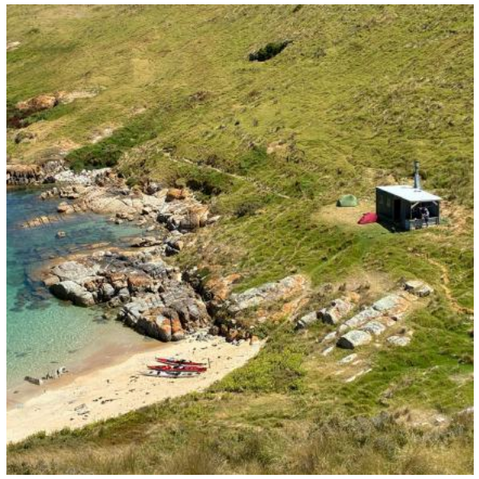
Reflecting on the journey, I think 75 per cent of the effort and hard work is required in just getting to the starting line. We did a great deal of training to get up to speed. This included mastering the kayak roll, paddling in challenging conditions, bashing into headwinds and learning navigation. We completed several overnight and multi-day paddles, which helped bond the group and to see how we responded when things got tough.

Plenty of research, chatting with people who had completed the journey and scanning the internet for all things Bass Strait led us to be prepared for at least a 14-day journey. We ensured we had plenty of food, emergency location beacons, marine radios and all the relevant charts and navigation equipment.

Always checking the forecast

The first day was a 47 km paddle from Port Welshpool, about 200 km south-east of Melbourne, to Wilsons Promontory. It was a satisfying feeling to be under way with an outgoing tide as the sun rose and the moon faded away. We quickly fell into our paddling rhythm and talked of the weather and challenges ahead. In fact, the weather became the main focus of conversation for the entire trip and we accepted that we were at the mercy of mother nature.

Campsite at Winter Cove, Deal Island.



Hogan Island Campsite.

We overshot our campsite on the first day, which wasn't a good sign of our navigation skills. We had to paddle back into a head wind and were relieved to finally find Refuge Cove, a lovely protected bay surrounded by rugged Australian bush and large grey and orange granite boulders dipping into the pristine water.

After another in-depth weather analysis we arose at 5.30 the following morning to get on the water at daybreak and begin the 55 km journey into the open waters of Bass Strait. This was the first big step away from the mainland, the leap of faith that put us out there, and I for one was nervous. We pushed off and headed south, glancing over our shoulders at the fast disappearing mainland.

The conditions were good to us and after a few hours we raised our sails and took advantage of a fresh cross-breeze. We faced a few nasty currents as we came around the northern side of Hogan Island. However, after almost nine hours of paddling, we were very pleased to see the small hut, in a protected bay, that was to be our campsite.

The next day was forecast for 30 km/h winds and we all agreed a rest day was a good idea. Being the only ones on this barren windswept island was something we all enjoyed. We went hiking, swimming, fishing and enjoyed exploring our surroundings.

Well rested, we headed off at daybreak the next day with good conditions aiding our passage through to Erith and Deal Islands. During the many hours of paddling, we always stayed in close sight of each other. Sometimes close enough to have a conversation and share past glories and future dreams. Other times we would keep our own space and spend time deep within our own thoughts.

Every one- to one-and-a-half hours we would have a five-minute snack break and have some beef jerky, muesli bars, scroggin mix or even a peanut butter wrap. The weather would soon come up in conversation and away we would go again, perhaps with an adjusted bearing to follow or a new landmark to aim for.

Crossing these vast expanses of the Bass Strait made me feel very vulnerable and exposed to the power of nature. Even with the fantastic weather we were getting, we were highly attuned to any changes in the wind swell or building cloud formations that could spell a change in our fortunes.

> *Reflecting on the journey, I think 75 per cent of the effort and hard work is required in just getting to the starting line.*

Flinders Island became clearer and closer on the horizon and we pushed onward making the most of the good conditions. As we came around Craggy Island we encountered a change in conditions. We were negotiating larger chop, waves breaking over the deck and copping splashes in the face. We pulled in a bit tighter to support each other and re-focused on the point of land on Flinders Island we were aiming for.

However, as we got closer to Flinders the conditions calmed down again and the going was much more pleasant. We made our way to Royden Island. Arriving at Roydon Island, I felt a weight lift off my shoulders. Spotting the white sand, turquoise waters and shallow reefs meant most of the open ocean crossings were done.

The next morning we headed off again. It was still a day of more than 30 km, but the slower start meant that we got caught up in some storms that afternoon. As a storm came in with some heavy rain and winds, we decided to land for lunch on a secluded beach with some amazing beach caves for shelter. We headed off again for Whitemark and the pub there.

As Whitemark came into sight, so did a big storm that hammered us with rain pelting down and some massive thunder and lightning strikes. We spent an uncomfortable hour paddling through the storm, arriving on Whitemark Beach like drowned rats.

By the time we had found some shelter, got into some dry gear and found our way to the pub we were all pretty wet and cold. We had a couple of beers before heading to bed.

We left early the next morning. It was a magical still morning and we enjoyed getting an early start and doing plenty of kms before lunch. Our goal was Trouser Point and to climb Mt Strzelecki on this day. The weather was excellent and the magnificent views made the climb well worth the effort.

Day 8 was an early start and another long one at approx 50 km. Again the weather was good to us and we had minimal winds as we crossed the Franklin Sound passage. We ended up on Clarke Island getting as close as we could to Tasmania and studying the weather for our final crossing.

Fanfare for the common paddler

Our final day of the crossing was one we had been forewarned about; it was the 25 km Banks Strait between Clarke Island and Tasmania. We made the decision to begin our journey around 9:00am with the wind at our backs. The morning winds were predicted to be 10–15 km/h up until around 1.00pm, when it was predicted to change and be un-paddleable for the following three or four days, so it was now or never.

We began with travelling speeds of above 10 km/h and as we got further into the crossing the conditions became more unpredictable. Plenty of waves were breaking over the boat and a few would hit you side on. With the wind making paddling a lot easier, we managed to hang in there.

We needed to make a few adjustments, but in general, the plan had worked and we came into some easier waters and managed to distinguish Little Musselroe Bay. We noticed an ominous looking cloud bank building from the south-west and we were very relieved to be so close to landfall.

Our journey came to an end with little fanfare.

Paddling the Bass Strait was an amazing experience. Reflecting on the journey there were some key elements to our success. One was having like-minded people and open discussions around your trip and personal objectives. Wait for the weather to be suitable for a window of at least three or four days before starting the journey.

The Strait Crackers were able to make a strong start and then adapt to the ever evolving moods of the sea. Always preparing for the worst, but then taking advantage of any good conditions meant we had a fantastic run, managing the trip in nine days with only one bad weather day of rest required.

It was certainly a relief to get the trip done and the grandeur and power of the great southern ocean was not lost on any of us. We always had full respect for the ocean and were very grateful for the safe passage she granted us.

For all of 'The Strait Crackers', this will be something of a bookmark event in our lives. It takes a lot of effort to plan and complete a trip of this magnitude but, from my experience, the adventures and subsequent memories are always worth it.

David Johnson
One-third of The Strait Crackers

PS: Special thanks to Mike Hole at the KV Gym who was my secret weapon in getting ready for the Bass Strait crossing. Mike pummelled me into shape and gave me loads of great ideas, exercises and positive vibes that allowed me to achieve my goal.

ADVENTURE

As Whitemark came into sight, so did a big storm that hammered us with rain pelting down and some massive thunder and lightning strikes.

Finish Little Musselroe Bay — L to R Christian Avasalu, Paul McMahon and Dave Johnson.

The Strait Crackers – at a glance

Route
Port Welshpool (Vic) → Wilsons Promontory → Hogan Island → Deal / Erith Islands → Flinders Island → Clarke Island → Musselroe Bay (Tas)

Distance
Approximately 350+ km (total paddling distance)

Duration
Nine days on the water
One rest day (weather)

Longest paddle
64 km (open water crossing)

Final crossing
Banks Strait – Approximately 25 km

Team
Christian Avasalu, Paul McMahon, David Johnson

Departure
Early February 2026

Preparation time
Two years (planning, training, recruitment)

Training included:
- Kayak roll mastery
- Open water and headwind paddling
- Navigation and chart work
- Overnight and multi-day expeditions

Conditions faced:
- Open ocean crossings
- Strong currents and shifting tides
- Storms with lightning and heavy rain
- Breaking waves and cross swells

Equipment:
- Sea kayaks with sails
- Marine radios
- Emergency location beacons
- Navigation charts
- Multi-day food supplies

Wildlife and surroundings:
- Penguins, dolphins, eagle rays, Cape Barren geese, seabirds, snakes.
- Granite coastlines, white sand beaches, turquoise water, remote island camps

Key lesson:
Wait for the weather ... and adapt to the ever-evolving moods of the sea.

Backyard chooks – it's the Pits!

The quest for the perfect chicken

Journalist Howard Sacre in conversation with the Valley's Rob Folkard

Many people will be familiar with chicken whisperer Rob Folkard from the poultry pavilions at the Kangaroo Valley Show and other district shows. His hobby is breeding prize-winning chickens, with his wife Deb, in Wattamolla, eight kilometres east of Kangaroo Valley village. This conversation has been edited for publication.

(Howard Sacre) Rob, what is it about the breeding process? This elusive, perfect bird. What is it that fascinates you?

(Rob Folkard) *It's precisely that, you'll never get there, but trying to breed the perfect bird is the thing. It's funny, whenever you deal with other poultry people, they're all after the same thing. It's a fascination with birds and you can breed to a standard in fairly quick time, get a result, eggs hatching in 21 days – and within two or three months after that, you'll know whether you're on the right track or not.*

(HS) And how often do you breed the perfect bird, or at least the near-perfect bird?

(RF) *Um, rarely. I think in the whole time I've been breeding chooks, I've had six Birds of Show. The first one was an Andalusian way back in 1982 or thereabouts. In those days, I was known for them because Andalusians were a rare breed, and yet I used to breed them to a very high standard. More recently I had very good Campines. Basically, it's the process of improving, year-on-year, making sure that the birds you've got this year are better than the birds you had last year.*

(HS) Do you lie in bed at night and think about … how can I make this chook better?

(RF) *The short answer is: yes, all the time. I'm always working on a new mating, a new way of perhaps, doing a bit better. I'm always on the lookout for different characteristics. Every day when I look at them, I think if I put that bird with this bird, I might just achieve a certain thing that I'm trying to improve.*

Or I worry about little faults. I know somebody who got out of chooks because every bird they bred had faults. Well, every bird in the world has faults.

(HS) Define a typical fault.

(RF) *Millions of them. Flat shins instead of legs that are supposed to be round. Knock knees. The wrong eye colour. Eye colour is very important. The wrong feather in the wrong place. Combs are a big one. Anything to do with the head of a chook is very important because most people's first impression is the head.*

(HS) Rob, tell me about how you developed an interest in poultry, in the first place.

(RF) *From a very young age. I think I was about six, we always had birds, like, aviary birds, and my Dad brought home some Bantams for me. And I bred them from that age, until we left Kempsey, for at least two years. And then we moved to Canberra when I was about 22 and I got interested in breeding again.*

(HS) If you take away any pretence or hint of modesty for a moment, do you think you're one of the top breeders in our district, if not our state?

(RF) *No. No, no. Nothing like it. There are hundreds of bigger and better breeders than me. What a lot of people do is they buy two good chooks, thinking that will give them good chooks, and it won't. You need to know how, and it's different for every breed, and there are people with a hell of a lot of knowledge. It's just a different world out there.*

(HS) You've obviously accomplished a lot, given the number of ribbons on the wall, so you're doing something right?

(RF) *At a local level, yeah. I do have a ribbon for best Sussex at the Canberra Royal, w hich I was very happy with. Those bigger shows are the mark of the really good breeders.*

(HS) Which one of those ribbons gives you the greatest pride and sense of achievement?

(RF) *I think the Champion Rare Breed. I always keep a rare breed. I keep Seabrights at the moment. At most shows, there'll be about 20 breeds that are considered rare, so winning in a rare breed category at a big show is very rewarding. Many years ago I won Bird of Show with an Andalusian male bird, a Mediterranean breed, at the Fairfield Rare Bird Show.*

(HS) Do you have a favourite breed?

(RF) *It depends on who I'm winning with at the time I suppose. I think the Pit Game chickens are the easiest to get along with, and I do quite well with them, whereas the Seabrights, while they are beautiful birds, they're very cantankerous and they can be really frustrating to breed. They can be very spooky and you think you got them ready for a show and you find they've flown into the wire overnight and broken all their wing feathers or something like that. I think my favourites are Pits because they're so relaxed and so easy to get along with.*

(HS) Did you say Pit?

(RF) *Yes, its full name is the Australian Pit Game because they were originally developed for the fighting pits. But they don't do that anymore. I've never met a person in all my years in poultry who has ever been to a cockfight. Other than overseas. Overseas they do.*

(HS) Are there young people getting into this breeding hobby?

(RF) *Yes there are young people, and in fact, around here, my biggest rival with the Pits is a young kid, about 12. He got some birds off me five years ago, and he's got really good Pits now. He often beats me at some of the shows.*

(HS) What's a good bird for someone to keep who would like to have nice looking chooks and some eggs.

(RF) *There's quite a few actually. ISA Browns are relatively short-lived, three years will pretty well see them out, whereas birds like Australorps, Langshans, Leghorns, Welsummers – all those birds will lay, up to eight years old, consistently.*

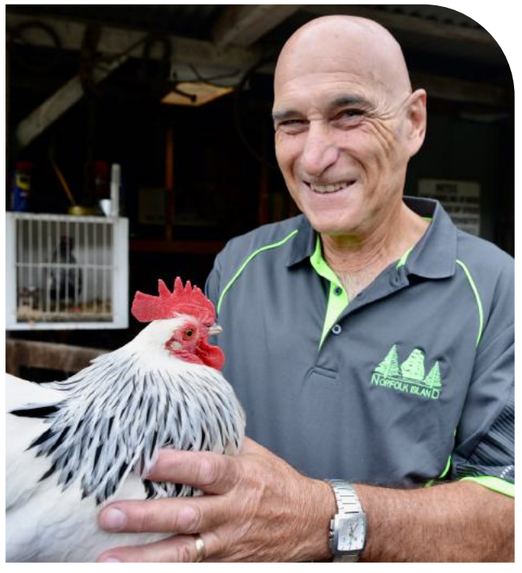
(HS) Final question. When I spoke to your wife Deb, I asked her if she was a chook widow. And she basically said yes.

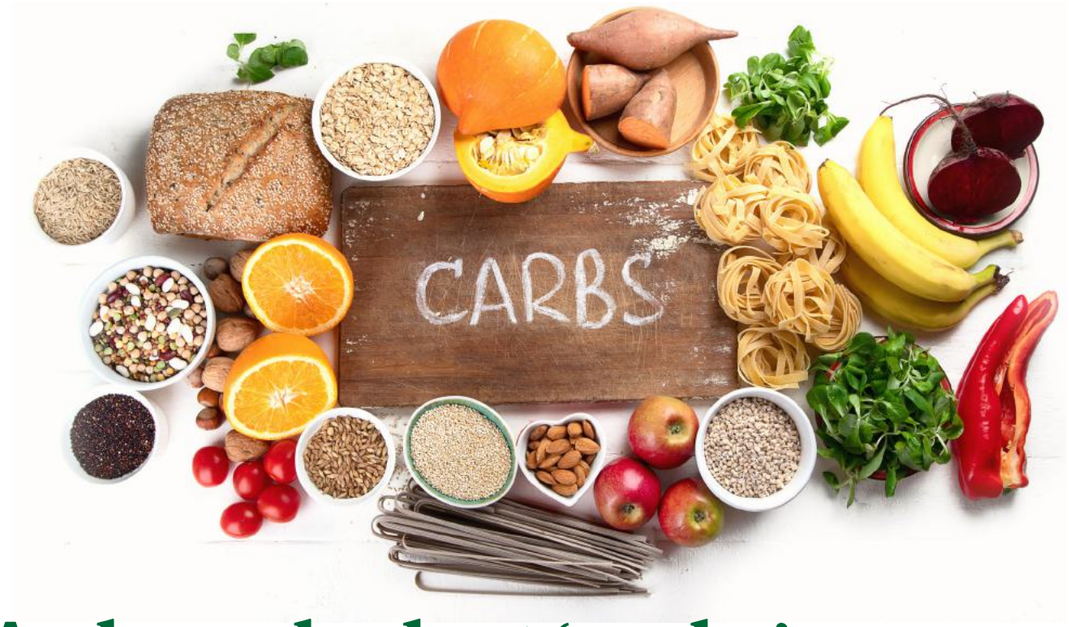
(RF) *Yes, I think so. I do spend a lot of time on the chooks, but you've got to. It's no sense just throwing them in a cage and expecting them to do the work. There are plenty of people who have fallen foul, for want of a better term, and it's led to marriage break-ups, and that sort of thing, because they spend all their time with their chooks and not enough time with their partner. It is an issue but I think I've got a reasonable balance. If I'm not doing the chooks, I'm generally mowing the lawn.*

(HS) Rob, thank you very much.

(RF) *Okay. Good on you.*

Howard Sacre





A closer look at 'carbs'

Carbohydrates are not as bad as they are made out

Judging a food by a single nutrient is short-sighted. Last month, my column looked at fats and how the complexity of foods containing fats influences the way the body uses them. This month, my topic is carbohydrates.

Carbohydrates consist of **sugars** and **starches**. They come in a range of foods: some accompanied by valuable nutrients; others with little nutritional value. Many types of dietary fibre also fit into the category of carbohydrates.

Sugars

The two major categories of sugars in foods are monosaccharides and disaccharides.

Monosaccharides include:

- Glucose – also called dextrose.
- Fructose – found in fruits, honey and vegetables.
- Galactose – an essential sugar found in the milk of all mammals.

Disaccharides include:

- Sucrose – composed of one molecule of glucose and one of fructose.
- Maltose – comprising two molecules of glucose.
- Lactose – one molecule of glucose and one of galactose.

Starches

Starches are made up of long chains of simple sugars. The way these sugars are linked influences how rapidly starches are digested by enzymes in the small intestine.

> *Those who are physically active can happily consume more carbohydrate than those whose life is largely sedentary.*

How the body digests carbohydrates

Enzymes in the small intestine break down disaccharide sugars and convert starches into sugars, mainly glucose. This is the body's primary source of energy, essential for the metabolism of the brain and other organs.

Glucose is absorbed from the small intestine into the blood and taken to cells throughout the body.

Starches are usually digested more slowly and thus provide a more lasting source of glucose compared with straight sugars. However, modern food processing and some cooking methods mess with this by changing how quickly we metabolise starches.

For example, yeasted breads made by the traditional method of letting dough rise slowly are digested more slowly than modern packaged breads that use additives and induce a 'rapid rise' system. This is done to reduce the cost of making breads but the subsequent change in the rapidity of digestion in the small intestine can create problems, especially for those with Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes.

Some cooking methods provide health advantages by slowing the digestion of starch and converting some to form 'resistant starch'. As well as leading to a slower release of glucose in the small intestine, resistant starch increases healthy bacteria in the large intestine.

When potatoes are cooked and served hot, their starch is digested fairly quickly. If you leave potatoes to cool down, some of the starch changes and when you eat the potato, this starch will 'resist' digestion in the small intestine and pass to the large intestine.

Rice cooked by the absorption method rather than being boiled in lots of water and then drained is also digested more slowly. If cooked rice is cooled and later used for fried rice, some of its starch will also benefit healthy bacteria in the large intestine.

Italians recommend cooking pasta only to the al dente stage. This also benefits digestion.

CSIRO has also developed a variety of barley with an increased content of resistant starch.

Carbohydrates and energy

Under normal circumstances, the energy used for metabolism and for most types of physical activity comes from a mixture of glucose and fatty acids (from fat).

A small amount of glucose is stored in the liver in the form of glycogen. This can be released rapidly if the blood glucose level falls. Some hours after your last meal, you may be aware of this release if you experience a rumbly 'hunger pang'. This is a signal to eat something and if you don't, the body releases some glycogen from the liver to restore the normal blood glucose level. That doesn't last long and if you still haven't eaten, you may get a second pang.

Once the small store of liver glycogen is used, if you still don't eat a food containing carbohydrate, the body can maintain its normal blood glucose by converting protein, either from food or from lean muscle tissue. Neither option is desirable as protein and muscle tissue have other functions. (Note: the true hunger pang I'm referring to here is not the kind of 'hunger' that may arise from the smell of hot chips or the sight of a tempting pastry.)

Larger quantities of glycogen from carbohydrates are stored in muscles and are available only for the muscles during physical activity. The more physical activity you do, the greater the store of glycogen in muscles.

When we use glucose for energy, insulin, a hormone produced by the pancreas, is needed. Some 'low carb' enthusiasts regard insulin as something undesirable. In fact, it is entirely normal – and essential – within limits.

A sudden surge of glucose from sugars or rapidly digested starches will cause more insulin to be released. That's unlikely to be a problem if you are being physically active as the insulin will help the body use glucose for the energy needed. If you have little physical activity, and therefore don't need a sudden influx of energy, a high insulin level will mean you burn less energy from the fat you are eating, or from your body's fat stores.

Good or bad?

It's best to avoid too many rapidly digested sugars and starches. However, concluding that all 'carbs' are bad is not justified.

Those who are physically active can happily consume more carbohydrate than those whose life is largely sedentary.

It's also important to check the other nutritional attributes of foods that contain carbohydrates.

Dietary fibre

Wholegrain cereals and breads, legumes, nuts, seeds, fruit and vegetables all contain not only carbohydrate, but different kinds of dietary fibre – the major source of food for 'good' bacteria in the intestine.

Low-carb diets lack sufficient dietary fibre. Some followers of these diets claim that low-carb vegetables are a source. That's true up to a point – but leafy vegetables have only limited types of dietary fibre whereas other plant foods contain a wider variety.

Nutrients

The foods that contribute dietary fibre also contain a wide range of important nutrients. Wholegrains, legumes, nuts and seeds are top sources of protein as well as vitamins B and E and many minerals. Fruits and vegetables provide vitamin C.

Problems

Sugar contributes carbohydrate but no protein, minerals, vitamins or dietary fibre. Foods with little or no dietary fibre and a high content of sugar or starch should play no more than a small role in any healthy diet. That list includes sugary drinks, confectionery, biscuits, pies, pastries, cakes, sugary cereals, many desserts, and sweet or savoury snack foods (many of which contain sugar as well as salt).

It's a good idea to check the ingredient list on food labels, but be aware that sugar may be listed by any of 60 different names, including dextrose, sucrose, barley malt extract, palm sugar, brown rice syrup, cane juice, xylitol or fruit juice concentrate. Some foods for young children claim they contain fruit or vegetables, but these are just the sugar extracted from the fresh product.

Sugary drinks are a special problem. They differ from solid junk foods in that they have no effect on the quantity of other foods we consume. I don't advocate eating biscuits or chips, but if you do, hormones in the gastrointestinal tract will send a signal that you have had something to eat. This means you are likely to feel some degree of satisfaction and eat a little less of other foods. That basic control mechanism doesn't work for sugary liquids.

Take home message

No need for a low-carb diet. Carbohydrates are rarely a problem when consumed in moderation and from foods with other important nutrients.

Dr Rosemary Stanton OAM
Nutritionist

> *The foods that contribute dietary fibre also contain a wide range of important nutrients.*

KVV Book Club

This month's book:

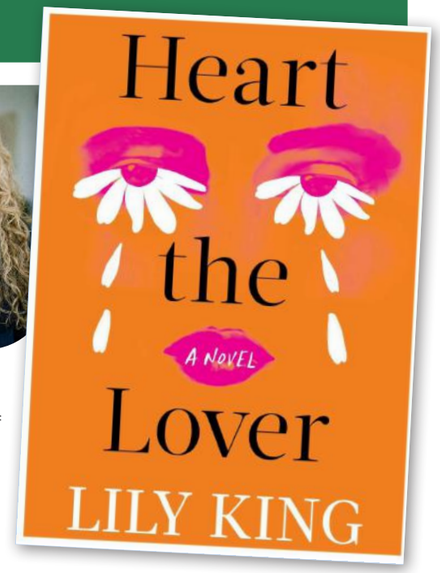
Heart the Lover by Lily King

This month we have a look at *Heart the Lover* by Lily King. This is a coming of age, university-based novel that morphs into a mid-life reminiscence. It is a compelling and enjoyable read.

Our KV Book Club was looking for something a bit lighter and humorous following a few months of serious tomes dealing with weighty life-and-death questions. And this novel fitted the bill, although it did wrench at the heart and occasionally cause a few tears.

Lily King is an American author living in Portland, Maine. She has written six novels including *New York Times* bestsellers and she has won numerous prizes and awards.

This is a book about first, young love and how that love echoes through entire lives. It is an easy, fast, at times funny and at times heart-wrenching read. King is a very good writer, and she well remembers her undergrad English Lit studies. The book is full of literary references. For example, Yash and Sam call their dates Daisies in a nod to Daisy Buchanan from *The Great Gatsby* but they call the narrator Jordan because she started college on a golf scholarship.



Jordan/Casey (the narrator, whose real name we discover in the final sentence of the book) meets Sam and Yash, '*two smart guys*', in an English Literature lecture and she begins a relationship with Sam. It is an awkward and excruciating young relationship. Sam is very religious and determined to remain celibate. Eventually Casey ends up with Yash who in retrospect, 20 years later, is one of the loves of her life.

The characters, even the secondary ones, are finely wrought and the storyline is a bittersweet rollercoaster. The book is about the choices we make when we are young. All the heartbreak, grief and sliding door moments and the impact that all of those have on the rest of our lives.

This book is apparently a prequel and/or sequel to King's earlier novel, *Writers and Lovers*, which I now need to go and read. I am glad I have discovered King. She is a very good writer and I think I will enjoy her other novels.

Next month we will review *The Things We Never Say* by Elizabeth Strout. A new standalone book by the author of the series of books set in Maine including *Lucy by the Sea*, *My Name is Lucy Barton* and *Oh William*.

Cathryn Ferguson

The characters, even the secondary ones, are finely wrought and the storyline is a bittersweet rollercoaster.

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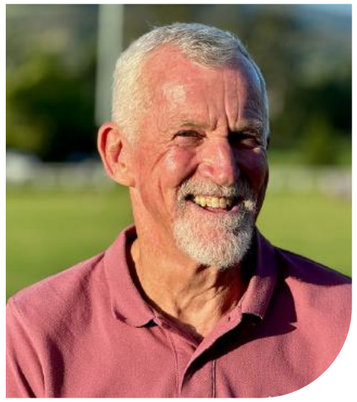
Words from the President



Returning to the Valley after my recent time in Sydney for health treatment was deeply special. It reaffirmed a strong sense of where I belong and reminded me of the care, strength and generosity of the Kangaroo Valley community.

Just as meaningful was returning to work alongside our wonderful KV Show Committee. Their support during a time when I wasn't able to contribute at full capacity meant a great deal to me. Equally, the way they came together — stepping up and working seamlessly as a team — was instrumental in delivering such a successful Show for our community.

One of the immediate highlights on my return was attending, appropriately masked, the somewhat delayed post-Show Committee meeting. This first meeting after the Show is always an important one. It provides the opportunity to reflect on what we achieved, assess how we performed, and consider how we can continue to improve.

Each committee member, along with several key volunteers, presented thoughtful and professional reports. These captured highlights, lessons learned, and constructive ideas that will prove invaluable as we begin planning for the 140th Kangaroo Valley Show in 2027. I sincerely thank everyone for the time, care and effort invested in these contributions.

In the March issue of the *Voice*, I spoke about the importance of continuing to grow and evolve what we have built — embracing new, community-led ideas while strengthening our traditional foundations. Central to this is listening and creating space for our community to help shape the future direction of the Show.

The insights gathered through these reports provide a strong foundation as we move into planning for 2027. Alongside this, we are keen to broaden community involvement in a more active and collaborative way and we are currently considering best ways.

Before then, our AGM in July will offer another important opportunity for community members to attend, share their perspectives, and contribute to the ongoing direction of the Show. We warmly encourage anyone with an interest to be involved.

After all, this is our Show — your Show.

Stephen Wilson

Snags, sweat and Show spirit

KV Show Committee fires up at the Sydney Royal

Over Easter, a team of 11 from the Kangaroo Valley Show Committee headed to Sydney with a simple goal: raise funds and get the job done.

At the Big Bush BBQ at the Royal Easter Show, that meant stepping behind the grill for a full day of chopping, cooking and serving – the kind of work that doesn't slow once it starts. Led by Secretary Mairi Langton, the team settled into the rhythm early.

From 9.00am through to 4.30pm, it was constant. Onions sizzling. Sausages turning. Bread lining up. Sauce at the ready. No breaks. Just a steady stream of customers – more than 1500 across the day – each one handed a sausage sandwich and, in turn, supporting a small country show hundreds of kilometres away.

By the end, the numbers told part of the story: more than 1500 sausages sold and around $6000 raised for the Kangaroo Valley Show. But the rhythm of the day is what stays with you.

On a special WhatsApp group, early messages from Lidcombe Station. Easter wishes between shifts. Photos shared mid-afternoon as the pace held. And then, as the day wound down, the familiar chorus: sore feet, smoky clothes, and the satisfaction of a job done properly.

"Sore feet here."
"We smell like a sausage!"
"Still on the bus ... thanks for a fabulous day."

Mairi's wrap captured it best – more than 16,000 steps, 1552 sausages sold, and eight hours on the go. The onion team emerging with band-aids and a laugh. A few moments to sit, then back up again.

It's not glamorous work. It's hot, repetitive and relentless at times. But it's also where community shows itself most clearly – in people who turn up, take a role and keep going.

And while the setting may have been Sydney, the spirit of the day was unmistakably Kangaroo Valley – practical, generous and determined to keep something good going.

Julie Ward

National Volunteer Week – May 2026

Across Australia, National Volunteer Week recognises the vital role volunteers play in building strong communities – and this small team effort is a perfect example.

From early starts to sore feet, it's the behind-the-scenes work that keeps events like the Kangaroo Valley Show alive.

Thank you to all who give their time – not just during Show

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National Volunteer Week 18–24 MAY 2026
YOUR YEAR TO VOLUNTEER

Across KV, volunteers are the quiet force behind so much of what we value.

From the sports fields to the stage, the showground to the church hall, market gardens to community groups like the Lions Club – people give their time, skills and energy to make things happen. Many of the stories in this issue of the *Kangaroo Valley Voice* exist because of that contribution.

The recent Royal Easter Show BBQ is just one example – hours of chopping, cooking and serving by a small team, raising vital funds for the Kangaroo Valley Show.

Behind that sits something larger. The Kangaroo Valley Show is built entirely on volunteer effort. The committee works year-round – planning, organising, fundraising and solving the many moving parts required to bring the Show to life. As the Show weekend approaches, that effort expands, with a workforce that swells to hundreds, supporting the thousands who come through the gates from near and far.

None of it is possible without a 100 per cent volunteer team.

Events like Sculpture in the Valley rely on that same spirit:

In 2025, Sculpture in Kangaroo Valley really shone. The volunteers made it happen. Supporting artists, keeping things running smoothly, and building strong community ties. The artists sold their work, visitors to the Valley loved it, and the event was a hit – profitable and ready for a comeback in 2027. AITV couldn't have asked for a better outcome.

– Stuart McCreery, Festival director

That spirit extends across the arts:

Kangaroo Valley Folk Festival would not exist without its volunteers. Year after year, our volunteers show up with generosity and their skills support various elements of the festival. From event coordination, to getting people through the gates, setting up, packing down, MC'ing, bartending, keeping kids entertained, collecting our 'ugly mugs' to help reduce coffee cup waste, or capturing it all through photos (plus so many other things!). We are very grateful for them all. Come join us anytime, we'd love to have you.

– Christen Webster, Festival director

It is this willingness to give – generously, consistently – that binds a small community together.

During National Volunteer Week (18–24 May 2026), we acknowledge and thank every person who contributes in this way. Your time matters.

Clockwise from top left:
1. Nikki, Helen and Wendy, Sculptures in the Valley volunteers, 2. Kate and Spike – Two of the hundreds of Show volunteers and 3. Kangaroo Valley Folk Festival volunteers Al and Rod.

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Easter spectacle captures the main street

Kangaroo Valley Public School's unique Easter Hat Parade brings the community together

On the final day of Term 1, KVPS was buzzing with excitement as students from Kindergarten to Year 6 came together for a joyful afternoon filled with Easter-themed fun. The much-anticipated Easter Hat Parade, a visit from the Easter Bunny, an engaging Easter Egg Hunt, and the P&C Easter Raffle made for a memorable celebration enjoyed by all.

The festivities began with the wonderful tradition of seeing Bruce [Latham] bring joy to all of our students, their parents and community members, as well as visitors driving through town who show their appreciation for his efforts. The air was filled with the sound of honking horns and cheering, a lively sign of how much Bruce's presence is cherished by the community. [Bruce was dressed in a giant bunny suit!]

One of the most special aspects of our celebration is the Easter Hat Parade's unique location on the main street, Moss Vale Road. Unlike most school parades, ours isn't confined to the school grounds – it spills into the heart of Kangaroo Valley, turning the main street into a vibrant stage for creativity and community spirit.

This year, we were fortunate to enjoy wonderful weather, allowing the parade to stretch along Moss Vale Road and showcasing students' imaginative, colourful hats to parents, families, shopkeepers, community members, tourists and town visitors.

The spectacle draws crowds who might not ordinarily have seen the students' creativity, as people from all corners of the Valley come together to cheer and encourage our students. Local shopkeepers and residents join in the fun, while visitors passing through are treated to the lively atmosphere, horns honking, cheering and a truly memorable display of Kangaroo Valley spirit.

Heartfelt thanks to so many

Safety was a priority throughout the day, and thanks to the assistance of Senior Constable Todd Cremer, traffic control was expertly managed, ensuring a safe environment for everyone involved.

A standout moment of the day was the Easter Egg Hunt, where the Easter Bunny delighted students by personally gathering them on the playground for the activity. Year 6 students partnered with their Kindergarten Buddies to search for eggs, enhancing the sense of community and teamwork across the school.

The P&C Easter Raffle was another highlight, with many generous donations and enthusiastic ticket buyers contributing to its success. A heartfelt thank you goes to all who donated prizes, purchased raffle tickets, and to the dedicated P&C volunteers whose hard work made the raffle possible.

We would like to extend a sincere thank you to everyone who contributed to making the day so special for our students – whether through volunteering, cheering, donating or simply being part of the celebration. Your support truly elevates the event and makes it an unforgettable moment for the whole school.

The Easter celebrations at Kangaroo Valley Public School not only brought joy and laughter to students but also strengthened the connections between the school and the wider community. We look forward to more events that bring us together in the future.

It's true what they say: "It takes a village," and we're so grateful for ours. Thank you for your continued and valued support of our small school.

Jennifer Arnott
Principal
Kangaroo Valley Public School

Join us for our Book Week Character Street Parade

Looking ahead, we warmly invite community members to join us for our next large community event: the KVPS Book Week Character Street Parade.

This exciting parade will take place on Wednesday, 26 August at 9.30am along Moss Vale Road, between the school and the Village Green Nursery car park.

Come and see our students bring their favourite book characters to life in a colourful and entertaining celebration of reading and creativity.

We encourage everyone to line the street and be part of this wonderful community tradition to make this bigger and better than ever!

News from the Pews

Church of the Good Shepherd Kangaroo Valley

Easter was pretty busy all over Kangaroo Valley, and it was at the Church of the Good Shepherd as well.

Some 150 people attended our 10.00am Easter Sunday service alone. Our main church building was filled to the brim. People also sat in our hall and on the grounds.

They didn't just come for the Easter egg hunt! People of all ages still really want to hear about the incredible change and hope that Jesus brings to a person's life.

Our Kids' Club returns

Kids' Club is restarting at church in term 2! Kids' Club is for kids aged five to eight and it runs every Thursday after school from 3.15pm to 4.30pm, starting in May. You're really welcome to bring your children along.

The leaders for Kids' Club will be Sandra (Sandy) Green and Andrew Paterson, along with a team of helpers from church. So you know, every helper undergoes Working with Children Checks and compulsory safe ministry training to make sure our kids have the safest environment possible to have fun and learn about Jesus.Want to know anything about Jesus or the whole Christian thing? You are so welcome to give me (Andrew) a call on 0410 760 271 anytime, or just come to church one Sunday at either 8.30am (traditional with hymns and prayer book) or 10.00am (contemporary with children's church and youth group once a month). Come and check out what it's all about.

All the best.

Andrew Paterson

The youth group at Drawing Room Rocks

Kate Pell and Friends

Yoga & more class timetable

Term 2 2026: 14 April - 18 June

Tuesdays:	Beginners Yoga	8:30-9:30am
Wednesdays:	Beginners-General Yoga ***Upper River Hall*** *(please bring a blanket)*	8:00-9:30am
Thursdays:	Yoga Flow	7:30-8:30am
	General Yoga	9:00-10:30am
Fridays:	Qi Gong with Sue	10:00-11:00am
Sundays:	General Yoga	9:00-10:30am

Healthy body Healthy mind

All yoga classes are with Kate.

Everyone is welcome. Please contact teacher if you are new to the class.

Doors open 15 mins before class.
Wear comfy, loose, stretchy clothes.
All equipment provided.
Zoom classes available.

More details at: katepellyoga.com

Kate Pell - 0432 598 582
Sue Cochrane - 0408 510 151

535B Jacks Cnr Rd, KV - 9kms from Bendeela Rd turn-off

KVCCB
WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Wildlife Rescue Car Care Kit

Measures to help our injured native fauna

As we know, wildlife is abundant in our beautiful Valley. All too often we see the horrific results of unfortunate vehicle and animal movements. Do you know what to do if you come across an injured animal or accidently collide with one?

In the first instance, you should call WIRES (1300 094 737) or Wildlife Rescue South Coast (0418 427 214 north of Batemans Bay or 0417 238 921 south of Batemans Bay). Maybe now is the time to add these as contacts in your phone – you can scan the QR codes in the below boxout to easily add the numbers to your contact list.

As a second level of assistance, the Kangaroo Valley Community Consultative Body (KVCCB) is making available Wildlife Rescue Car Care Kits for purchase from our fantastic Post Office (thanks Katrina!).

The kits are priced at $50 (below cost price) with any surplus funds being donated equally to WIRES and WRSC. To reduce admin overheads on the Post Office, we are only accepting cash (yes, very old school – soz non-boomers). We have received a grant from the Veolia Mulwaree Trust and a donation from the Upper Kangaroo River Openair Cinema Group to assist with the costs associated with the creation of the kits. Thanks to both organisations.

The idea is that you purchase a kit and keep it in the car, ready should you come across an injured animal. Your first action should be to contact WIRES or WRSC. Second, and only if it is safe to do so, you could provide some assistance to ease the animal's suffering. Please always consider your own safety should you provide assistance.

The kit is supplied 'flat packed' (so it doesn't take up too much room) and contains:

- **Safety and Usage Guide** – things to do and not do
- **Hi Vis Vest** – keep yourself visible
- **head torch** – so you can see at night
- **gardening gloves** – to protect your hands
- **latex-free gloves** – in case things get yucky
- **hand sanitiser** – to protect yourself and the animal
- **towel** – to wrap the animal and keep it warm
- **pillowcase** – to wrap the animal, if appropriate
- **cardboard carry box** – to keep the animal safe during transport
- **scissors** – to free the animal from entanglements
- **tin snips** – to cut wires etc.
- **notepad and pen** – to record details.

Please consider purchasing a kit for each of your vehicles, so you are always prepared. Of course, you don't need to purchase a kit or provide assistance BUT we do ask that you report incidents to WIRES or WRSC. It's the least we can do to share this beautiful environment with our native fauna.

Al Lockyer

Contact details for injured Wildlife

Scan the QR codes to easily add the numbers to your contact list

WIRES
1300 094 737

Wildlife Rescue South Coast:

North of Batemans Bay
0418 427 214

South of Batemans Bay
0417 238 921

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

Image above: Carla Jackett in her studio, Berry Mountain.

Carla Jackett

Working between paint and clay, Carla Jackett creates intuitive works shaped by landscape, memory and material

Originally from Vancouver, Canada, Carla Jackett has long been shaped by the landscapes of Kangaroo Valley and inland deserts. Working from her studio on Berry Mountain, her practice spans paintings in abstraction and ceramics, grounded in a deep connection to place and a commitment to experimentation.

Carla's paintings are gestural and intuitive – layered compositions that resist rigidity and embrace spontaneity. Working primarily from memory and imagination, her forms are often inspired by the rainforest environment in which she lives, as well as the vast, remote desert landscapes she regularly travels through. These influences are not rendered literally, but distilled into expressive, non-representational works that respond to mood, movement and sensation.

Alongside painting, Carla's ceramic practice has become an increasingly renewed central focus. Working with clay, often sourced, recycled or altered by hand, she creates both sculptural forms and functional vessels.

Fired in her gas kiln, her ceramics carry a sense of unpredictability and material transformation, with glazes developed through experimentation using ash from local plant matter and backyard clay. Texture, form and surface interplay to create objects that are both tactile and quietly expressive.

Across both disciplines, Carla's work is driven by a desire to remain open – to allow the process to lead, to push beyond control, and to respond instinctively to both material and environment.

Quick-fire studio questions

Coffee or tea in the studio?
Coffee in the morning, tea in the afternoon.

Music, podcasts or silence while working?
Often just birdsong, and modern jazz.

Morning painter or late-night creator?
Morning lark.

Favourite colour right now?
Greens of the forest and grassy meadows.

A tool you can't live without?
My gas kiln and a good brush.

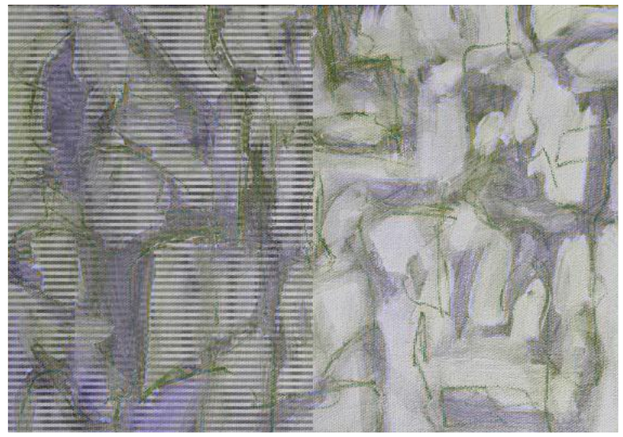
Best creative advice you've received?
Be true to yourself – create who you are.

Artist Spotlight is a monthly feature of the Kangaroo Valley Artists Collective, introducing artists shaping the creative life of the Valley. Artist interviews by Amanda Ritchie.

In conversation

Your work feels deeply connected to landscape yet remains abstract. How does place influence your practice?

Living in the rainforest, I'm surrounded by layers of texture, twisted vines and lush shades of green – while in stark contrast, the desert landscape with its palette of ochres, gibber and salt lakes, dotted with ancient breakaways, is where I feel a strong, deep connection. I take those experiences with me and they come through the work in different ways. It's more about a feeling or memory than a direct representation.



Top Paddock, Acrylic on Board, 12 x 8, 2024.

You work across both painting and ceramics. How do these two practices differ for you?

Painting is much more immediate. It's about getting the paint moving and responding in the moment. Ceramics is slower and more process-driven – there are so many stages, from wedging to bisque and glaze firing. I really enjoy the hands-on nature of clay and the experimentation involved, especially with glazes and firing. The results can be unpredictable, which is exciting.

Experimentation seems central to your work. What keeps you exploring?

I'm always testing things – different materials, glazes, even making my own clay bodies. Collecting clay locally or using ash from the wood heater, it all feeds into the process. It keeps the work evolving and stops it from becoming too stagnant. That's really important to me.

> *"It's more about a feeling or memory than a direct representation."*

Wing form, handbuilt ceramic, 2023.

Unsquare Dance, acrylic on canvas, 50cm x 50cm, 2022.

Kangaroo Valley Football Club

KVFC hosts inaugural Friendship Games

Kangaroo Valley came alive with energy, laughter and the sound of football boots on grass on Saturday 28 March, as Kangaroo Valley FC proudly hosted its inaugural Kangaroo Valley Friendship Games.

The gala day brought together young players aged six to nine from Illaroo, Shoalhaven Heads, Bomaderry, Shoalhaven United and our very own KVFC, creating a wonderful celebration of grassroots football and community spirit.

Across the day, teams played three or four matches each, giving every child plenty of opportunity to be involved, learn and enjoy the game. While there were goals scored and plenty of exciting moments, the true focus of the day was clear – participation, doing your best and, most importantly, having fun.

From first kick-off to the final whistle, the fields were filled with smiles, encouragement and teamwork. Players supported one another, coaches emphasised positive play, and families cheered from the sidelines, creating a warm and inclusive atmosphere that reflected the very best of junior sport. The fantastic teamwork shown by KVFC's children, coaches and managers was a highlight, reflecting the strong culture being built within the club.

Great teamwork from a great team

The success of the day was no accident. The Friendship Games was the vision of KVFC President Dean Mackechnie, who worked tirelessly to bring the idea to life, ably supported by KVFC's hardworking committee and dedicated volunteers. Their organisation, enthusiasm and attention to detail ensured a seamless and enjoyable experience for all involved.

> *From first kick-off to the final whistle, the fields were filled with smiles, encouragement and teamwork*

A special mention must go to groundsman Brad Hawthorne, whose efforts in the lead-up to the event were nothing short of outstanding. After heavy rain on the Thursday and Friday before the Saturday morning gala day, Brad marked the fields not once, but three times to ensure they were ready for play – an effort that did not go unnoticed. Sincere gratitude must also go to Jacqui Lenz, who went above and beyond – as she so often does – mowing the oval and ensuring Osborne Park looked absolutely immaculate for the day.

Off the field, the ever-popular barbecue proved a huge hit under the leadership of Toni Champion, with excellent support from Heidi Smart, Linc James, Lisa Grant, Abbie Bradburn and Brad, keeping players and supporters well fed throughout the day.

Our field announcements were made possible thanks to Cristian Fuentes and his amazing audio-visual magic. Adding to the professional feel of the event was our smooth-as-silk ground announcer Tuneil Mackechnie, ably assisted by Jasmin Mawson, who also worked tirelessly behind the scenes throughout the day juggling the draw across all age groups – no easy task – to ensure every team played as many matches as possible.

Trevor Dando's and Jason Shepherd's efforts with the set-up and pack-up were also greatly appreciated, helping ensure the day ran smoothly from start to finish. KVFC's Technical Director, George Fallah, also provided valuable support to a number of coaches from visiting clubs – many of whom were coaching for the first time – and their appreciation was evident, further contributing to the positive and inclusive environment on display.

Capturing the spirit of the day was photographer Lisa Grant, who snapped some fantastic photos that will no doubt be treasured by players and families alike.

Community football – and community – the winners

With more than 150 young players participating and more than 600 visitors in attendance, the event created a vibrant buzz throughout the Valley, with local shops and eateries enjoying the influx of families and supporters.

Events like the Friendship Games are a reminder of what community football is all about. It's not just about results, but about building confidence, forming friendships and fostering a lifelong love of the game.

KVFC would like to thank the visiting clubs, players, coaches and families for embracing the spirit of the day, as well as the committee members and volunteers whose tireless work made the event such a memorable success.

With such a positive response, the Kangaroo Valley Friendship Games looks set to become a highlight on the junior football calendar for years to come.

Kangaroo Valley Football Club

BOWLS

MEN'S AND MIXED BOWLS

The Pennants competition has dominated play in the past month. This, together with a couple of washed-out days and the Easter break, has resulted in a reduction in the number of social bowls games played. Nonetheless, Kangaroo Valley has been well represented in all forms of the game.

Open Gender Pennant

On **21 March**, Berry 2 won only one of the three games against Tathra 2 and lost the big board by 64 points to 52 to secure one of the available 10 competition points. Berry 5 exacted some revenge on Nowra at Berry, winning two games and taking the big board by 60 points to 56, thereby earning nine competition points. In the Grade Seven game, Berry 7 went down to Sussex Inlet RSL 7 by 59 points to 41 but, by winning one game, they earned one competition point.

Berry 7 was the only Berry team to play on **28 March**, with Berry 5 having the bye and Berry 2's game against Merimbula being washed out.

Shoalhaven Heads 7, at home, did not have it all their own way against the Berry 7 team. Despite winning two of the three games, Shoalhaven Heads barely scraped through by winning the total score by 65 points to 64. Nonetheless, Berry earned only one competition point and Shoalhaven Heads scored nine.

The Berry Grade 2 team played two games on consecutive days, defeating Tathra 10 nil (72 to 45 on the big board) at Berry on **11 April** and going down to Milton Ulladulla by nine points to one (63 points to 51 on the big board) on **12 April**. Berry 5 was soundly defeated by Shoalhaven Heads, going down 80 points to 42 but, by virtue of winning one game, managed to earn one competition point. A similar fate was in store for the Berry 7 team, who lost the big board by 78 points to 43 against Mollymook but managed to secure one competition point by winning one game.

The upshot of all this is that Berry 2 are running fourth out of six with 42.5 competition points, Berry 5 are last out of three with only 12 points and Berry 7 are running fifth out of six teams with 24 points.

SOCIAL BOWLS

28 March – George Waddell, James McKinlay and Rob Folkard 28 – Ron Nelson, Brian Jones and Bill Chittick 16. Darryl Goodger and Bob Dunn 23 – Col Agar and Steve Kellett 23.

1 April – George Waddell, Darryl Goodger and Rob Folkard 19 – Brian Jones, Bob Dunn and 'Tige' Lidbetter 17. Ron Nelson and Bill Chittick 33 – Derek Raymond and Steve Kellett 19. Cut-throat Consistency – 'Jingles' Chittick 57, Col Agar 53 and Keith Pepper 38.

4 April – Irene Dunn and David Badger 19 – Derek Raymond and Bob Dunn 19.

8 April – Riley Bezant, Darryl Goodger and Jingles Chittick 22 – George Waddell, Bob Dunn and David Badger 15. Peter Collie, Steve Kellett and Bill Chittick 21 – Col Agar, Keith Pepper and Rob Folkard 17. Brian Jones, Terry Bezant and Terry Hayes 19 – Daniel White, Mark Power and Tige Lidbetter 19. Jimmy Whyte and Laurie Watson 32 – Derek Raymond and Ron Nelson 18.

Rob Folkard

GOLF

Here's the golf report for March and April – welcoming the lovely autumn weather on the greens.

Saturday 21 March, a Stableford round, saw a small group of competitors. Congratulations to Allan Harvey winning with 33 points, followed by Chris McVeigh with 31 points, followed by Lan Thomas with 24 points.

Our stroke and Monthly Medal round, on **Saturday 28 March**, saw congratulations go to visitor Marcus Creais, winning with a fantastic round of 68, followed by Allan Harvey with 75 winning the Monthly Medal, followed by another visitor, Adham Mikhael from Pennant Hills Golf Club, with a score of 77.

On the **Easter Weekend 3–6 April**, the sun was shining and the course was in great shape for all. A Stableford competition was amiable on all four days. On **Friday 3 April**, congratulations to Allan Harvey winning with 33 points, followed by Ian Thomas with 32 points and Suzanne Greer with 27 points.

On the **Saturday 4 April** round, congratulations to Chris McVeigh, one of our newest members, winning with a great 36 points, followed by Allan Harvey with 35 points, then by Kieran Mannix, visitor from Georges River Golf Club, with 34 points.

Saturday 18 April was a Stableford round, with many competitors, including 10 visitors. Congratulations to Gordon Thomson winning with a great round with 37 points, followed by Suzanne Greer with 35 points, followed by visitor Jason Bulter with 34 points.

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

Allan Harvey, KVGC Captain

"A hole in one is amazing when you think of the different universes this white mass of molecules has to pass through on its way to the hole"
– Mac O'Grady

New on the menu

Two new arrivals, and a growing appetite in the Valley

There is a quiet shift under way in Kangaroo Valley's dining scene.

In recent months, two new venues have opened their doors on Moss Vale Road, each bringing something different, yet both quickly embraced by locals.

Lotus has arrived most recently, opening within the past month and already drawing strong interest. Valley Bliss Eatery, now nearing six months, has had time to settle – building a steady following across breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Together, they signal something worth noting: a renewed energy in local dining.

That sense of renewal, however, sits alongside continuity.

For many, the site now home to Lotus carries a long memory. Known most recently as Jing Jo, it was an institution in the Valley for more than 20 years, shaped by David and Chai and woven into the rhythm of local life.

In a recent Facebook post, Monique Maul, co-owner of The General Cafe, captured that sense of place: "There's something special about a space that holds years of shared meals, conversations and community." Reflecting on Jing Jo, she noted how it became "deeply woven into the fabric of our town".

It's a reminder that in a small community, venues are never just places to eat – they are part of how we gather, connect and belong.

A growing conversation

In the months ahead, the *Voice* will continue to invite local contributors to share their dining experiences – within the Valley and beyond.

Because where we gather matters.

We begin with Valley Bliss Eatery, where locals and regular diners Ken Novich and Matthew Southworth share their experience.

Have you eaten at Lotus yet? Or another great restaurant or cafe?

Be part of our new regular review. Scan the QR code and complete the form – we'll take it from there.

Valley Bliss Eatery

Location: Moss Vale Road, Kangaroo Valley

Phone: (02) 4465 2949

Cuisine / Style:: Varied café dining with Nepalese influence

Dining: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Hours: Tue–Sun | 8.00am–2.00pm

Thu–Sat | 5.30–8.00pm

Price range:
Breakfast: Moderate | **Entrées** $18–$28 | **Mains** $28–$48

Licensed / BYO: BYO

Pets: Welcome on the outside verandah

From Everest to Kangaroo Valley

The story behind Valley Bliss begins far from the Valley – on the trails to Everest Base Camp in Nepal. "The dream of opening my own restaurant began in 2012," says Anmol (pronounced Onmul), "on my very first job as a Sherpa guide.

"Every time we arrived at a teahouse or lodge, people lit up ... the moment they sat down, shared a meal and warmed up, they became happy again.

"That's when I realised something about myself: I wanted to be around that feeling. I wanted to create it."

That vision is shared with his wife, Sujata – known as Suju – his high school sweetheart. With a background in customer service for a computer company, and later experience across front-of-house, coffee and finance, Suju became, as Anmol puts it, "an essential part of the journey".

After marrying in 2023, the couple moved to Australia the following year with a clear goal – to open their own place. "We kept coming back to Kangaroo Valley," Anmol says. "There was something about it that felt familiar – the landscape, the pace of life, the sense of community."

Their first attempt at securing a venue didn't work out. Then they noticed a 'For Lease' sign on Moss Vale Road.

"Something felt right. When we stepped into the space, we immediately knew – it was exactly what we had been looking for."

Since opening, that intention – to create a place where people feel welcomed, fed and at ease – has begun to translate.

Early impressions

As part of this new *Voice* series, local diners Matt Southworth and Ken Novich – both repeat visitors – offer an early read on how Valley Bliss is landing.

"The service was, as always, impeccable with sincere and gracious warmth," Matt says, visiting for a birthday breakfast after an early morning walk.

Coffee, he notes, is "extremely good", and the small details matter. As he prepared to leave, staff asked him to remain seated before bringing out a birthday dessert.

"Exquisite!"

Ken, who has dined there multiple times, points to consistency. "We have been there several times for brunch and dinners and enjoyed every meal."

Across those visits, dishes are "well cooked and tasty", with the seafood pie a standout he returns to.

He also sees potential in the space itself, suggesting the white walls could lend themselves to local artwork, with softer lighting adding warmth.

Firey tales

Captain's Message

It was a very busy time of the year for the brigade, with nine call-outs in the past month along with Hazard Reductions and landowner assistance burns. This puts a big load onto our volunteers, who give up their time continually at all hours of the day/night, often leaving their families and work to assist others.

We have had several members complete training for chainsaw use and off-road driving, along with four new members starting their basic training to become fire fighters.

I'd like to thank several local residents for their generous donations that help support our brigade to purchase additional equipment and ongoing running costs like drinking water, data plans and iPads that are essential for us to do our role.

As we head towards the end of the financial year, here's just a little reminder that all **gifted donations are fully tax deductible.**

Captain Dusty
0412 865 638

Using blowers during a hazard reduction.

Remains after fire extinguished.

NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

PLEASE USE QR CODE TO NOTIFY US WHEN BURNING

1800 NSW RFS | www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

PILE BURNS AND BURNING OFF

The Fire Permit season finished on 31 March 2026 and will recommence on 01 September 2026. However, there is a process that still needs to be adhered to, prior to burning off in the off-season:

APPLY, NOTIFY, ADVISE

1. You must notify the NSW RFS at least 24 hours before you light the fire.
   Ways to notify the NSW RFS:
   Online at: www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/ or via the QR code above.
   Phone: Shoalhaven Fire Control Centre (FCC) 4424 4424 between 8am and 4pm Monday to Friday.
2. You must advise your immediate neighbours at least 24 hours before you light the fire.
3. You must not light the fire if a Fire Danger Rating is HIGH or above
4. At least one person responsible must be present on site until it is extinguished.
5. Check the upcoming weather conditions, as the pile may continue to smoulder for days.
6. If you believe you cannot safely control the fire once it has been lit, dial 000.

If you have concerns about doing this yourself, please get in touch with the KV fire brigade, and we can possibly assist you with your pile burn or check your site for you.

Compiled by Tracey Basman

Incidents

20 March – Bonfire – Bendeela Campground. Small, illegal fire that was checked and extinguished.

27 March – Tree down – Cambewarra Mountain. A tree blocking the road, which was cut up and removed.

27 March – Motor Vehicle Accident (MVA) – Moss Vale Road, Barrengarry. Serious head-on accident with the driver of one vehicle trapped and was treated and removed by ambulance rescue. The other vehicle's occupants, including a baby, were also assessed by ambulance crews. KV crews provided fire protection and treated oil spills until the vehicles were removed.

27 March – MVA – Moss Vale Road, Beaumont. Three-car accident with two vehicles towed and oil spills treated once removed.

4 April – Tree down – Carrington Road, Cambewarra. Large tree blocking both lanes, was cut up and removed.

11 April – Pile Burn fire call – Scotts Road, Upper Kangaroo River. Investigated but was a safe legal burn with no action taken.

12 April – Grass fire – Carters Road, Barrengarry. Investigated but was a safe legal burn with no action taken.

15 April – Equipment fire – Upper River Road. Result of a small, escaped pile burn spreading into nearby long grass, burning a tractor and a car along with other stored items. Quick action prevented this spreading further into other tractors, earth moving equipment and a large shed. Crews utilised breathing apparatus due to thick toxic smoke from burning tyres etc. This involved all 3 KV trucks, Broughton Vale and Beaumont brigades.

16 April – Tree alight – Bendeela Road. Call-out to several logs still burning from hazard reduction carried out earlier in the day. The area was checked and ensured it was still inside the burn perimeter.

Hazard Reduction

Brigade conducted a 2 Ha hazard reduction utilising slow cool burn techniques to reduce fuel along Bendeela Road on the way to Bendeela campground. This was successfully carried out utilising blowers to prepare fire breaks along the sandstone escarpment edge where there was no vehicle access.

Training

Kangaroo Valley Fire Brigade Member Olivia Harvey attended the Young Members Leadership College hosted at the Dubbo RFS Training Academy. Read the separate report on the Four-Day Program on page 36.

RFS

Make a difference

Volunteer with Kangaroo Valley Brigade

For more information about volunteering in your area contact kangaroovalleyrfb@gmail.com or scan here:

rfs.nsw.gov.au/join

Training:

The Dubbo RFS Training Academy – Four-Day Program

I had the privilege of attending the Young Members Leadership College hosted at the Dubbo RFS Training Academy, a four-day immersive program designed to develop leadership capability in young RFS members from across New South Wales.

The program brought together 23 participants of diverse ages, backgrounds and brigades, creating a dynamic learning environment grounded in teamwork, service and personal growth.

This opportunity was both an honour and a milestone in my RFS journey. It strengthened my understanding of leadership within the organisation and broadened my confidence to lead in the wider community.

Across the four days, we participated in a series of structured workshops, practical activities and group challenges. These sessions focused on:

- **Leadership Foundations** – understanding leadership styles, values and behaviours.
- **Communication Skills** – active listening, clarity under pressure and giving/receiving feedback.
- **Team Dynamics** – collaboration, conflict resolution and building trust.
- **Decision-Making Under Pressure** – scenario-based exercises reflecting real RFS environments.
- **Community Leadership** – recognising the broader impact of RFS members beyond emergency response.
- **Personal Development** – confidence, self-awareness and goal setting.

The program balanced theory with hands-on learning, ensuring every participant could apply leadership concepts in real time.

One of the most meaningful aspects of the program was the strong sense of camaraderie that formed among the 23 participants. Despite coming from different regions across NSW, we quickly built a supportive and energetic team culture.

These connections have continued well beyond the program. Many of us still stay in touch, catching up at events such as the Sydney Royal Easter Show, brigade activities and RFS gatherings. The friendships formed at Dubbo have become a lasting network of young leaders who continue to encourage and inspire one another.

Attending the Young Members Leadership College was an incredible and transformative experience. I left the program feeling more confident, capable and grounded in my role within the RFS. It strengthened my commitment to serving my community and gave me practical tools to lead with integrity, empathy and clarity.

I feel genuinely grateful and privileged to have been selected for this opportunity. It has shaped not only my understanding of leadership but also my sense of belonging within the RFS community.

Olivia Harvey
Kangaroo Valley Fire Brigade Member

The people behind the paper

Robey, the Paper Boy

Every month, without fail, the *Kangaroo Valley Voice* lands on shelves around the village and in letterboxes across the region. It might look like magic, but behind that reliable delivery these days is a 13-year-old with a job to do and the motivation to do it well.

Robey is the *Voice*'s 'distribution coordinator', which in plain terms means he is the reason you can actually pick up a copy. He personally delivers papers to retailers around Kangaroo Valley, and makes sure that postal copies are organised and on their way to subscribers further afield. While he's relatively new to the role (having only been at it for a few months now), he's keen to keep going for quite some time yet.

A born and bred Kangaroo Valley kid, Robey has lived in the Valley his entire life and attended Kangaroo Valley Public School before heading to Nowra for high school. He is the kind of local who knows the Valley the way only someone who was born here can, which makes him rather well suited to the job.

When he's not out on his delivery rounds, Robey's world revolves around computers, good food and his mates. He has his eye on a new PC and is steadily working towards it, so every copy of the *Voice* he delivers is, in a small way, a step closer to that goal.

The *Voice* is proud to support local youth like Robey, and we are very grateful to our stockists who have embraced him as he does the rounds. We think distributing the Voice is a modern-day, Kangaroo Valley version of being the Paper Boy, so if you see him on his round, be sure to say hello!

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Pet of the Month

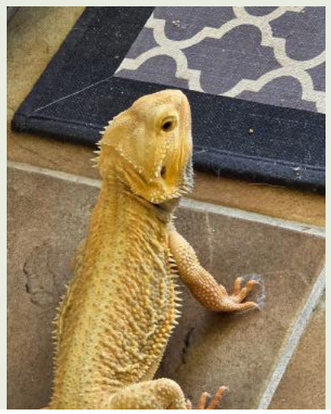
Rusty is a central bearded dragon. He is about one-and-a-half years old.

Rusty is a cute cuddle bearded dragon who LOVES crickets and crusting.

He is a beloved pet that we have loved having in our household.

He also loves to run and be active (we regularly take him outside on the grass and let him run and be free).

Estelle



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–2025, right through to 01–August–2026**.

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.

The Kangaroo Valley Voice

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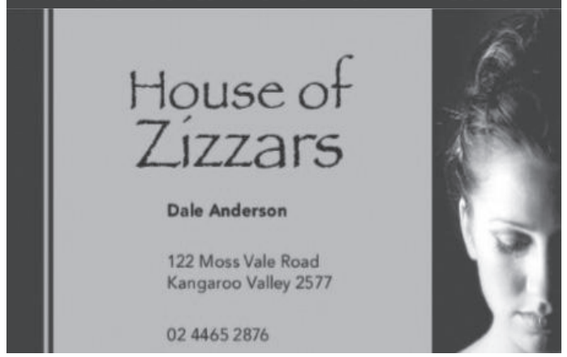

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SCHOOLS AND CHURCHES

Anglican Church | Andrew Paterson 4465 1585
Catholic Church | Parish Office 4423 1712
P&C President | Emma Chapple
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
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 ..... resilientkv@kangaroovalley.nsw.au
Rock-Wallaby | Melinda Norton 4887 8256
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Upper River Progress Assn | Gary Moore 0421 050 348
Upper River Hall ..... UpperRiverHall@Gmail.com

COMMUNITY SERVICES

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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
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