

t h e a b e r d e e n WHISPER

August 2025

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Aberdeen Highland Games Success

Aberdeen's strong Scottish heritage was on show for its annual Highland Games. Thousands of pipers and drummers converged on Aberdeen. The town transformed into a vibrant celebration of Scottish culture, music, and heritage. The event began with the massed pipe bands with clan tartans on display. It was a day full of athletic feats including caber tossing, hammer throwing, and tug-of-war. *Photo Credits: Amanda Gaffney – Ray*

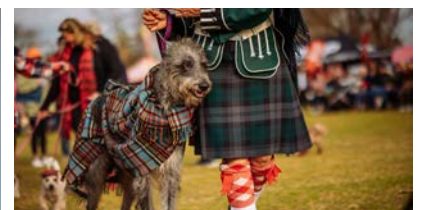


Community Information Session

The North Harbour Clean energy Group has an open invitation to the residence of Aberdeen and surrounding district to attend a Community Information Session on Wednesday September 17, 6.30 to 7.30pm.


The session in the Aberdeen Public School will feature a presentation from the development team. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback.

See advertisement on page 8.



Whisper Trivia

1. How many time zones are there in Russia?
2. What country has the most islands in the world?
3. Who invented the World Wide Web?
4. Which famous American pop band was originally called 'Kara's Flowers'?
5. Which driver has won the most Formula 1 championships?
6. What is the name of the coffee shop in the sitcom Friends?
7. What is Disney's first film?
8. Which Australian City was the first to host a Summer Olympics?
9. Which 2014 Oscar winning film was shot in Australia and based on a novel by F Scott Fitzgerald?



Answers:	1.	11
	2.	Sweden, over 7.
	3.	220,000
	4.	Melbourne
	5.	Tim Berners-Lee
	6.	The Great Gatsby
	7.	Central Perk
	8.	Maroon 5
	9.	Michael Schumacher

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FOUND LOST MEMORIES?
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Earle's Column

continued on page 5



TURBID, OR NOT TURBIDITY!
"Long suffering" is the only helpful description for the majority of residents in the Upper Hunter Shire who benefit from a drinking water reticulation system. By that, I mean the residents of Aberdeen, Scone and Murrurundi who had to endure nearly six weeks of a 'boiled water' alert from early June until July this year. Unfortunately, without grant funding of about \$80 million, this problem may well return to haunt us at some time in the future.

The torrential rain in May, that led to the devastating flooding in Taree, caused silts and clay to be washed westward from the Barrington Tops into Glenbawn Dam, from which the towns mentioned above draw their water. The suspended particles can then act to shield possibly harmful bacteria from purification chemicals that are added to our drinking water to ensure that it is fully potable.

The large monetary figure mentioned above is the estimated cost for a new water treatment/filtration plant proposed to jointly supply the Upper Hunter and Muswellbrook Shire Council areas. (Muswellbrook already has a filtration plant at its treatment works on the Hunter River, but I understand that it is at its full capacity and needs to be replaced. Hence, while we had to endure the boiled water alert, on this occasion, Muswellbrook was able to continue as normal.)

THE SPECIAL RATE VARIATION
Annual rates notices, for the 2025/2026 financial year have now been issued. I have been told of some very significant rate rises that go well beyond the proposed 10% rise. In one example from Scone, the rates have increased from around \$2,400 to \$3,700! Given that the SRV could only be applied to the land value component of the rates notice, the only other factor that could be contributing to the total is a reassessment of land values by the N.S.W. Valuer General at some time during 2024/25. I noticed that on my rates notice that a new valuation, dated July 2024, from the V.G. was used to calculate my rates in the year ahead.

If the Rates Notice that you have received has imposed a substantial financial burden on you please call me (0419 681 175) or email me (cr.shields@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au) or call the Council Administration Centre, (6540 1100) and raise your concerns. Council does have some, (limited) capacity to meet hardship situations.

THE GREAT COST-SHIFT 'SOLUTION'
Speaking of financial hardship, the Local Government Association of NSW has just released a report into the extent and severity of cost-shifting from the two levels of government, federal and state, above local government. By way of a definition, cost-shifting, is the practice of other levels of government deciding that they do not want to be involved in some form of service delivery and then decreeing that it become a function of local government. It is common that the funding attached to that service is reduced when it is passed to the local government authorities and then, over time, further reduced so that the majority of the costs are then carried by a local council. This 'epidemic' has been occurring for decades and simply means that services provided by councils are reduced, or in some cases, removed completely.

Missed the Whisper?

If you live in Aberdeen you should receive a copy of the Whisper but unfortunately, for whatever reason it may not get to your Letterbox. If it does happen you can collect a copy from the Aberdeen Post Office. A digital copy can also be found on the Hunter Valley Printing Website. Thank you for your understanding.

Happy to hear from you

If you know someone in your community that has an interesting story to tell, who's doing some interesting things - we'd love to hear about it. Chances are if you think it's interesting - others will too - and we're always open to ideas for stories, or features here.



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Would you like your story, event or advertisement in The Aberdeen Whisper? Phone 02 6545 2888 or email:
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COMMUNITY FAMILY FUN DAY

Sat 6th Sept. 2025
10am - 4pm
FREE ENTRY



MUSWELLBROOK
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- Upper Hunter Valley -



AMBER LAWRENCE
6 TIMES GOLDEN GUITAR WINNER

Championship Shows
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Lions Club

BARBECUE SUCCESS

A combined effort by local Lions Clubs – Aberdeen & Scone Lions, Denman Lions and Muswellbrook Lions joined forces to put on a great barbecue at the Aberdeen Highland Games. It was a fun day and well supported by many people. We would like to thank JBS Scone, Dimmock's Quality Meats Aberdeen for their support. Proceeds of the day went to aid the Cerebral Palsy Alliance Unit in Muswellbrook to help children in our district with various types of therapy.

WINTER RAFFLE WINNERS

1st prize: Leisa Ryan, who won a \$200 voucher from Dimmocks Quality Meats

2nd prize: Shayne Fibbins, who won a \$200 voucher from Foodworks Aberdeen

3rd prize: Wayne Bedggood, who won a \$200 voucher from Mitre10 Scone

4th prize: Sandra Collins, who won \$200 load of firewood

5th prize: Bob Rogers, who won a \$200 BP fuel card

Thank you everybody who supported this raffle. This raffle was drawn on Sunday, July 6, 2025 at Aberdeen Ex Servicemens Club. Thanks to all the local businesses for donating the prizes.

Supplied.



Pictured from left to right: Therese Garland, Tracey Ward, Kylie Facer, Steve Carter, Rob Herps, Rod Upton, Mary Hallet, Absent from photo: Bob Dixon, Andrew Carter

Boil Water Alert

Boil Water Alert – Scone (Aberdeen & Murrurundi may follow). Upper Hunter Shire Council has issued a Boil Water Alert for Scone due to elevated turbidity in the Glenbawn Dam supply following recent heavy rainfall.

Timing for When Boiling Is Required: Scone: Water was safe to drink until 8:00am 6 August 2025. Aberdeen & Murrurundi (incl. pipeline): May be added to the alert by Thursday, 7

August - Council will issue an update to confirm timing for those areas.

After the alert takes effect, tap water must be boiled before use for: Drinking, food preparation and washing produce, brushing teeth or rinsing mouth, baby formula and pets' drinking water.

How to boil safely: Bring water to a rolling boil, allow it to cool, and store in a clean, sealed container. Kettles with automatic shut-off are suitable.

Showering and bathing is safe, but avoid

swallowing the water. Wash dishes with hot soapy water or use a dishwasher. Children should take bottled or cooled, boiled water to school.

The council is: testing water daily, monitoring the system closely with NSW Health and working to restore safe drinking water as soon as possible.

This is a precautionary measure. We'll keep the community informed and let you know once it's safe to return to regular use.

Supplied.

Volunteers Needed

With just four weeks to go until the 2025 Great Cattle Dog Muster we are still looking for volunteers to help us deliver this free community event. Staging an event of this scale is not possible without volunteers, and we ask Chamber members, and their staff, to support us in making this year's event our best ever.

The 'Muster' is quickly becoming a major signature event for Muswellbrook and the Upper Hunter, attracting visitors from around the State, across Australia, and from Overseas.

Register today for a fun day out, and be part of celebrating the Upper Hunter being the birth place of the Australian Cattle Dog.

If you're interested to volunteer, email Wayne Toms at:

info@muswellbrookchamber.com.au

Supplied.

Feral Pig Control Awareness Days

An open invitation has been extended to landowners in the Upper Hunter to join an on-farm, in-paddock for practical advice and visual demonstrations of feral pig control activities.

The demonstrations will include:

- Feral pig signs
- Camera monitoring
- Free feeding & baiting best practice
- Feral pig trapping best practice
- Humane destruction
- FeralScan reporting

Landowners can register their interest in attending once the dates have been confirmed. It is expected the demonstrations will be late August or early September.

Supplied.



Hundreds Gather in Aberdeen in Protest Against Trump Visit

For one fleeting moment you could be forgiven for thinking Aberdeen in the Hunter Valley had taken to the streets to protest against Trump.

Of course it wasn't ... it was protestors against Donald Trump's visit to Aberdeen in Scotland.

President Trump was on a private UK visit to meet with Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Scottish First Minister John Swinney.

Supplied.

Aberdeen Public School

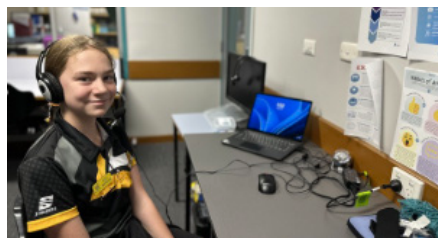
ABERDEEN PUBLIC SCHOOL DEBATE TEAM COMPETES!

Aberdeen Public School debating teams had an amazing day at Scone Public School competing in our first debate against a different school. Our Year 6 team (Aberdeen Tigers) debated first and despite a lot of great statements, were unsuccessful. Our Year 5 team (Aberdeen Stripes) went next, it was a very tough test of our lessons at school, but we were victorious. The adjudicator provided feedback for improvement. Our next debate was against Denman Public School who have a reputation for being highly competitive. Both APS teams put up strong arguments but were unfortunately, beaten by better teams on the day. Debating requires excellent public speaking and mental acuity, making it a valuable extra curricular activity.



CONGRATULATIONS FAITH A. ON YOUR ENTRY TO AURORA COLLEGE

Congratulations to Faith A. who gained entry to Aurora College after demonstrating strong academic achievement, particularly in her NAPLAN results, and gathered references from her teachers. Faith created a thoughtful 2-3 minute video, sharing how the program could support her learning and why she'd be a great fit for online study. As part of the program, Faith participates in interactive online lessons, collaborates on STEM projects, and attends masterclasses with experts from various fields. She has opportunities to connect with her culture and community, enhancing her educational journey.



PSSA SOCCER GALA DAY

The Senior Boys Team travelled to Bill Rose Park in Scone on Monday, 16th June, to participate in a PSSA Soccer Gala Day. We played Muswellbrook PS in our first game, and we ended up losing 0-6. A highlight from the game was when a player scored from a corner kick. Our second game was played against Mt Pleasant PS and we were successful, winning 2-0. Jake M and Elijah

A. scored; Elijah scoring in the last second of play. Thanks to Mr Stutchbury for being our coach, Mr Easton for being team manager on the day, and to our parents for transporting us and supporting the team. Overall, it was a fun day. Written by Jake M.



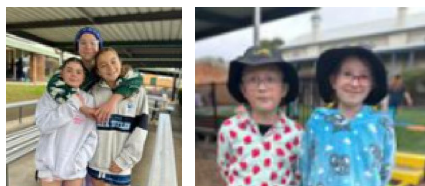
MAINTENANCE NEEDED IN OUR SCHOOL GARDEN

As the winter crops come to an end, we are hoping to do some much-needed maintenance in our school garden. We hope to purchase some corrugated garden beds to replace the old timber retainers, which will make the gardens safer for students and increase accessibility. Replacement will be a big job, so we will be organising a working bee in Term 3. Any assistance will be appreciated.



SRC PYJAMA DAY IN SUPPORT OF MND AUSTRALIA

Thank you to all our students and families who supported the SRC Pyjama Day to raise funds in support of MND Australia. Together, we raised \$208.00. Look how cute our kiddos are coming to school in their jimmy-jams and oodles!



Supplied.

Earle's Column

continued from page 2

In the LGANSW report, it is estimated that cost shifting is now costing \$497 per rate payer per annum. Further, in the past decade, to 2023/24, \$11,310,000,000 (that's \$11.31 billion!) has been shifted from higher levels of government to local government authorities. This places your council in an invidious situation because the only option open to us is to restrict, curtail or, in the worst case, cease providing a service to our community or seek a special rate variation to continue provision.

Perhaps the arrogance of all this is that each year there is an Australian Local Government Conference held in Canberra. It is generally scheduled for a parliamentary sitting week, so that delegates have the opportunity to meet with federal politicians to discuss matters of corporate and individual council significance. This year, the politicians rescheduled the parliamentary timetable and the conference arrived in the nation's capital which had been deserted by those elected to serve their communities at the federal level. I am going to have serious difficulty believing that the reschedule of the sitting weeks had nothing to do with a couple of thousand councillors and council staff arriving in Canberra with plenty of issues that they wanted to raise with Ministers and Members of Parliament! Not one of the great displays of moral courage from the civic leadership of this country.

THE PROPOSED CENTENARY COMMEMORATION OF THE 1926 RAIL DISASTER

The proposal will go to the Aberdeen CAC in August for their consideration. A fair bit of work has already occurred. In very late news, the subcommittee has now obtained a copy of the Coroner's Report from 1926. It runs to a mere 192 pages and includes the evidence given by 44 witnesses. Many of these appear to be Aberdeen townfolk who attended the scene on the night of the 10th June 1926. More to come!

Supplied.

Staff Cuts at Dartbrook Mine

The ABC reports staff cuts at Dartbrook.

In an online article the ABC has reported the Dartbrook Coal Mine is on the brink of collapse.

The article by ABC investigative reporter Alex Turner-Cohen suggests more than half of the mines staff have had their employment terminated.

The full article can be found on the ABC Upper Hunter Website.

Supplied.

Nic White Retiring from Rugby

Nic White has announced his retirement from Rugby after starring in the Wallaby's win in the third and final test against the British Lions. His career has taken him to 72 games for the Wallabies since his first appearance in 2013. He featured in two World Cups (2019 and 2023) and helped ACT Brumbies to a Super Rugby AU title during that period.

Nic is the son of Tom and Dianne White, formerly of Scone. His connection with Aberdeen is through his father who grew up in Aberdeen. Tom's mother and father Joan and Billy White were long time residents of Aberdeen His retirement from rugby prompted a high praise from former past and present rugby players and officials. In an article by Lachie Grey and Nathan Williamson in Rugby.com Wallabies coach Joe Schmidt paid tribute to White, celebrating his contribution to the game.

"First and foremost Nic is a great man to have in a squad. He's team first all the time and has been at the top of the game for over a decade," Schmidt said. "Having coached against Whitey, and now worked

with him in the Wallabies environment, he's the ultimate competitor.

STOP PRESS!

His international rugby retirement has been put on hold after answering an SOS to join an injury-hit Wallabies squad for the upcoming tour of South Africa after playmaker Jake Gordon was made unavailable.



Lodge Submissions

Submissions are being accepted until 4 August for an Upper House inquiry examining the Game and Feral Animal Legislation Amendment (Conservation Hunting) Bill 2025.

The private members' bill proposes amendments to the Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002, including to abolish the Game and Pest Management Advisory Board and replace it with the Conservation Hunting Authority.

The bill also proposes recognising and making provision for a right to hunt and abolishing restricted game hunting licences and replace those licences with conservation hunting licences. Also, it seeks to amend laws concerning management of Crown lands to establish that Crown land is available for hunting, however the bill provides that hunting is not to be permitted in national parks.

The committee will hold hearings at Parliament House, Sydney on 8 and 11 August and is due to report by 10 October. Further information, including the inquiry terms of reference and the bill, can be found on the committee's website: www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/Pages/current-events-in-committees.aspx

Supplied.

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A big thank you to the Warrior Disability Service staff, parents and participants for delivering your Whisper. The service offers people with disabilities choices through group activities, one-to-one support, and in-home support. NDIS registered. Sally Pereira is the Director of Participant Services. The office is situated at Shop 12 Brook Street Plaza, Muswellbrook, 0432 680 936.

Upper Hunter Shire Council July Meeting

LOCAL GOVERNMENT NSW ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Council confirmed that Cr Shields will represent the Upper Hunter at the 2025 Local Government NSW Annual Conference, to be held at Panthers Penrith and Western Sydney Conference Centre from 23–25 November 2025. A motion to send two delegates, Cr Shields and Cr Stolz, resulted in a tied vote (4 in favour, 4 against). The motion was defeated when the Mayor exercised his casting vote. A subsequent motion to send Cr Shields was carried, with only Cr Stolz and Cr Fraser voting against. Motions for the conference must be lodged through the online portal by 30 September 2025.

DISCLOSURE OBLIGATIONS FOR COUNCILLORS

Councillors were reminded of their obligations to lodge political donation disclosures by 11 August 2025 and electoral expenditure disclosures by 22 September 2025. Separate disclosures apply for donations made between 1 January and 30 June 2025, annual expenditure from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, and any candidate or group campaign expenses.

SUPPORT FOR WESTPAC RESCUE HELICOPTER FUNDRAISING

Council agreed to provide a \$400 donation towards the cost of green fees for a community fundraising golf day hosted by the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service at Scone Golf Club on 28 September 2025. While the request did not strictly meet the criteria of Council's donations policy, the Corporate Services Committee recommended granting the donation to support this vital emergency service.

Supplied.

Eyes to the Sky

NSW Police Rural Crime Prevention Team is asking farmers and rural landowners to come forward if they have seen a drone flying over their property or have information about suspicious drone activity. There have been reports of suspected illegal drone incidents in the Hunter Valley Police District and other areas this year and NSW Police suspects there may be more incidents. Whilst not always sinister, the Rural Crime Prevention Team would like landholders to report incidents, so they know where and when it is occurring especially if it involves livestock and cropping paddocks or machinery sheds. You are asked to record the time, location, and description of the drone; take photos or videos if safe to do so; then report the incident to CASA (Civil Aviation Safety Authority) if it's an incident of unsafe drone use or NSW Police if you suspect criminal activity or surveillance. A word of caution from police - do not attempt to damage, disable, or interfere with the drone, which is illegal and considered damaging an aircraft under federal law. Anyone with information about suspected criminal activity, such as trespassing or harassment, you can report it to your local NSW Police Station, Police Assistance Line on 131 444, Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 and in an emergency call triple zero

Supplied.

The Nepalese and India Delegation to The Lower Hunter Visit to Brokenwood Wines

Part 1 *by Doctor Dirt*

I had the privilege in late April and early May to assist Basu Bhattarai and her team from IFSD Consulting with organising and participating in a tour of the Lower Hunter for a delegation of twelve Nepalese and Indian Government and University officials. This was part of an award interchange program sponsored in part by the University of Western Sydney.

This highly enthusiastic and knowledgeable group of experts from these two countries. They have regular interaction and communication with policy makers and education systems. Specific work activities include advice, engagement on agricultural and environmental issues in their countries to Governments, Education Bodies and appropriate Departments – Authorities. These experts also work with regional communities. They are involved with on-ground programs to numerous farming communities, focusing on agricultural adaptations, sustainable practices, production and environmental actions and education. Background information provided by Basu to me explained that a major issue these overseas experts must consider in their homelands is the impact of populations and urbanisation.

The prime focus of the tour was to show and inform these overseas guests on what NSW Government Authorities and farming enterprises have in place on catchment management, biodiversity conservation, sustainability, environmental issues, water regulations, waste management and agriculture industries have in place on innovations and adaptative management. I know the NSW experts' presenters covered a number of topics that will be taken back to assist their communities. The visitors conveyed to us many experiences and solutions they have successfully undertaken through projects in their countries.



I will focus this article just part of the Day One of our tour to Pokolbin Wine Area where Lorrae St Vincent the Brokenwood Wines Laboratory and Sustainability Lead provided an insight of their enterprise. Particularly focusing on what they are doing to adapt, and to improved efficiency. In this article I will limit my focus on just part of her talk regarding water efficiency and land management.

For over 42 years I have been involved with Vineyard layouts, soil investigations and water management. Lorrae interactive talk summary is as follows:

- All vines are watered by a series of drippers located on the surface above the vines root zone. This saves water and costs, it reduces evaporation, water is not wasted through evaporation

and non-targeted water application. The risk of diseases is reduced as the vines are not covered by excessive water from the irrigation practices.

- The vines have a series of soil moisture monitors located in the root zones. This means water will be added as required. There is no under or over watering, application is varied when rain events are predicted or occurring.
- The vine rows are raised; soils are monitored on their nutrient levels. Compost and mulch are used to improve soil biological activity.
- Cover crops are between rows to reduce erosion.
- Many diverse native species are used in the vineyard areas to breed insects and other fauna species that prey on the invertebrates that affect the vines.
- Soil profiles, nutrients and structures are monitored and if required targeted fertiliser and soil ameliorants applied.
- The vine blocks are designed with diversion banks, grasses water ways and designated machinery traffic areas to reduce erosion. Even the raised amount rows are designed to prevent erosion and surface ponding.
- Chemical application is kept to a minimum and only applied after assessment. The industry guidelines on chemicals, the timing and application methods are followed.

In next month's episode I will cover what Brokenwood Wines and other Vineyards and Wineries are doing on, energy efficiencies, waste management, recycling and future innovations. The topic of climate change will be included in the next addition. The industry is faced major issues due to Climate Change in the Hunter Valley and throughout all mainland Australia.

Supplied by Steve Eccles.

Steve Eccles Consulting

phone: 0400 808 873

email: steveecclesconsulting@gmail.com

Super Prospect: Jake Clydsdale

Jake Clydsdale, formerly of Rouchel has received a huge vote of confidence from the coach of Canberra raiders. The son Jeoff and Wendy Clydsdale of Rouchel, Jake is now in his third year Raiders. Playing in the under 21 side Jake has made a significant impression on many, including Raiders coach Ricky Stewart. In an article on "Letsportsrock" web page, Stuart has called him a "super prospect" and a key piece in the club's future. At just 19 The article also states Clydsdale is already turning heads with his size, power, and fearless playing style. Stuart believes he has the tools to bring real physical presence and "dominance" to the Raiders forward pack in the years ahead. "Jake's got that rare mix of aggression and discipline," Stuart said. "He's not just a big body — he understands the game, he trains hard, and he wants to improve. That's what we want at this club." With the Raiders looking to rebuild into a genuine title contender, Stuart is demanding support from the fanbase as the next generation takes shape. "We've got the right talent coming through, but we need the Canberra faithful behind us more than ever. This team is growing, and guys like Jake are going to be at the centre of it."



Supplied.

UPPER HUNTER BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM PROPOSAL

Community Information Session

Wednesday, 17 September 2025
6.00pm to 7.30pm

Aberdeen Public School Hall, Segenhoe St, Aberdeen

Come along to our Community Information Session to learn more about our proposal for a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) in Aberdeen.

The evening will include:

- Presentation from the development team
- Opportunities to ask questions and provide feedback
- Light refreshments

Please register to attend:

<https://forms.office.com/r/bw16RDQfb1> or
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State Matters with Dave Layzell MP

PRICE RISE

Public transport fares go up from Monday 14 July with Opal fares to increase by an average 2.5 per cent to adjust to annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) movement.

For commuters travelling to Sydney Airport, the Station Access Fare (SAF), independently set by the Airport Link Company, also increases for using the Domestic and International Airport train stations and single trip tickets.

There is no change to the \$50 weekly cap for Adult Opal customers, the \$2.50 daily cap for Gold Senior/Pensioner Opal card customers and transfer discounts of \$2 for Adult Opal customers.

More information: <https://transportnsw.info> go to Tickets and Fares or the Opal Travel app.

Meantime, metro and regional train passengers will travel free for two days on Thursday 31 July and Friday 1 August on all Sydney Trains, NSW TrainLink, Airport Link, and Sydney Metro services.

The fare-free period is an acknowledgement of the travelling public's patience during the period of protected industrial action by rail unions.

DEMOCRACY CHALLENGE

Public high schools in the Upper Hunter Electorate have until 31 July to register for The Writing Democracy Challenge.

The Challenge is for Years 7-10 students to write a letter proposing a solution to a real-world issue addressed to either the NSW Department of Education or their local council.

Co-organised by the Gilbert + Tobin Centre of Public Law at UNSW, Story Factory, and NSW Parliament, with support from the NSW Department of Education - the civics education and engagement initiative engages students with important social issues, refines their writing skills, whilst learning the real-world practice of civics and democracy.

The 90-minute competition is held on International Democracy Day, Monday 15 September, with selected students invited to attend a Statewide final workshop on 26 November at the NSW Parliament.

More information about the Challenge, including a registration link, is available at: <https://www.gtcentre.unsw.edu.au/writing-democracy-challenge>.

TIMETABLE SURVEY

Upper Hunter communities can now provide feedback on a proposed timetable for a new coach service between Newcastle and Dubbo.

The service to operate on Mondays and Fridays will run Dubbo-Newcastle in the morning then Newcastle-Dubbo in the afternoon. Cassilis, Merriwa, Sandy Hollow, Denman, Greta and Maitland are among the proposed stops on the draft timetable for the Newcastle Express Coach.

Whether you are a frequent traveller or just thinking about a future trip, your input into the current survey can help shape the journey: www.facebook.com/Langleyscoachesdubbo



WINTER ILLS UPDATE

NSW Health advises that it is not too late to get your influenza vaccine with new figures showing a spike in flu cases over the past month in the Hunter New England Local Health District.

For the week ending 12 July, there 703 reported flu cases in Hunter New England taking the year-to-date total to 4,749.

So far this year, the Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) total is 5,408 reported cases with COVID-19 standing at 3,765 cases after increased activity in the previous four weeks.

NOMINATE NOW!

Nominations are open to recognise the achievements of talented and inspirational women in local councils across NSW.

The awards celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of women working and serving in local government, along with successful council programs aimed at supporting female participation.

The 2025 Ministers' Awards for Women in Local Government is the 18th annual staging of the event and will be presented during a

ceremony at NSW Parliament House on 23 October.

Nominations are being taken for the Alternative Pathways, Champion of Change, Elected Representative, Employment Diversity, Woman of Distinction and Young Achiever's awards.

Nominations close 19 August and can be made on the Office of Local Government website: <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/our-minister/ministers-awards-for-women-in-local-government/>

e-BIKE WARNING

The NSW Police Force is cracking down on illegal and non-compliant e-bikes amid a rise in unsafe use, injuries and fatalities.

Users are urged to ensure e-bikes are legal and not unlawfully modified turning them into dangerous, unregistered motorbikes.

E-bike riders must follow the same road rules as cyclists to stay safe and avoid serious consequences. E-bike rules require that the rider must primarily propel the bike with the pedals, an electrically power-assisted cycle must have the electric motor cut-off when the bicycle reaches 25km/h and riders need to keep to the left and give way to pedestrians on shared paths or footpaths.

VOLUNTEER NOW!

Muswellbrook Chamber of Commerce and Industry is calling for volunteers to assist with the 2025 Great Cattle Dog Muster.

The community family fun day is just under two months away at Muswellbrook Showground on Saturday 6 September.

Volunteers provide a helping hand on the day to deliver the free family event celebrating the Upper Hunter being the birthplace of the Australian Cattle Dog.

The chamber is looking for volunteers to be available for the whole day, but this does not mean they will be rostered for duties for the whole day, so they can have a break and also experience the event.

To join the fun by registering at: www.facebook.com/greatcattledogmuster/

Supplied.

Contact:

upperhunter@parliament.nsw.gov.au;
94 John Street Singleton 2330
PO Box 60 Singleton NSW 2330
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(02) 6543 1065 | upperhunter@parliament.nsw.gov.au

As your State MP I can make enquiries and representations on your behalf for matters involving NSW Government departments and agencies.

THE NATIONALS

for Regional NSW

- Gloucester
- Dungog
- Singleton
- Muswellbrook
- Aberdeen
- Scone
- Broke
- Branxton
- Luskintyre
- Lorn
- Bolwarra
- Maitland Vale



Authorised by Dave Layzell MP, 94 John Street, Singleton NSW 2330
Funded using Parliamentary entitlements.

The Latest on Vets Golf



CONGRATULATIONS TO BRETT DAN ON HIS WIN

There was a good roll up of Vets at Mdi on Tuesday, July 29 for the Stb event, held when we have five Tuesdays in the month. Thank you to Howie Lane for opening the club house for us and for the pies for lunch and to Captain Mick McCormick for organising the players' playing draw and processing the score cards.

Brett Dann won the event with 35 points from Mark Martin 33 second and Robert Norvel third 31.

Welcome to new member Mark Middleton.

Balls went to Shane Beverley and Bob Lawman 29, Alan Flanagan and Glenn Googe, 27; (Glenn suffered from a disappearing golf ball on a damp fairway – maybe it was underground) and Captain Mick McCormick 26, and on 25 Red Palmer and Mark Middleton.

The Bradman's trophy, kindly donated by Gary Morley was won by Graham Turvey. Nearest the Pins:-9th/18th Brett Dann.

GREAT HAVING DES PARTRIDGE BACK PLAYING

There were 25 players at Aberdeen Golf Club on Tuesday, July 22 for the G. T. Smith Trophy Stb event. Thank you to President Paul Gorman for telling us the history of George Smith and what a great leader he was.

Thank you to Mick McCormick for compiling the players' draw and to Bob Minch for organising the shouted lunch and the prize money. It was

great to have Des Partridge back playing again. We all wish Les Cuttriss a speedy recovery as well.

The winner of the event was Glenn Googe with 39 points from Dave Taylor second 38, Reg Davidson third 37, Will Coward fourth C/B 36, Bob Lawman fifth 36 and Elie Raad sixth 35.

Balls went to Tony Pearson 34, Gary Leake 33 and this group on 31 all on C/Bs: Paul Constable, George Campbell and Dave Perfrement. The Bradman's Trophy, kindly donated by Gary Morley was won by Mick McCormick. Nearest the Pins:- 4th Terry Mitchell 13th Paul Constable 9th Dave Taylor 7th Glen Standing



FUTURE GAMES:

- Aug 12th, Stb at Denman
- Aug 19, Stb at Scone, (please book-in with Ross Banks
- Aug 26th Stb at Aberdeen.

New players welcome. Shotgun start by 9.00am.

Picture on left: Brett Dann won the Vets' Stb event at Murrurundi Golf Club on Tuesday, July 29. He is congratulated by Captain Mick McCormick. Brett scored 35 points.

Picture on right: Glenn Googe won the G.T. Smith trophy at Aberdeen Golf Club on Tuesday July 22 with 39 points. He is congratulated by President Paul Gorman.

Supplied.



MACHEnergy

Mount Pleasant Operation

The Mount Pleasant Joint Venture owns & manages the Mount Pleasant Operation.

The Mount Pleasant Operation operates on a 24 hour a day, 7 day a week roster.

Please contact the following **FREE CALL** numbers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week if you have any questions or concerns.

COMMUNITY HOTLINE: 1800 886 889

BLASTING HOTLINE: 1800 931 872

GENERAL ENQUIRIES: 1800 931 873

For further information, including BLAST times and location, visit our website: www.machenergy.com.au or email: info@machenergy.com.au

Cellarbrations

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MONDAY 11TH AUGUST TILL SUNDAY 24TH AUGUST 2025

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XXXX GOLD STUBBIES	\$ 49.00 – LOYALTY \$ 47.00
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GREAT NORTHERN ORIGINAL STUBBIES	\$ 58.00
HAHN SUPER 3.5% 30PK CANS	\$ 59.00
PURE BLONDE STUBBIES	\$ 59.00 – LOYALTY \$ 57.00
GREAT NORTHERN SUPER CRISP 30PK CANS	\$ 62.00
HAHN SUPER DRY 4.6% 30PK CANS	\$ 64.00 – LOYALTY \$ 62.00
HAWKES MIXED 8PK CANS	\$ 29.00
SMIRNOFF CRUSH 4PKS	\$ 27.00
WOODSTOCK & COLA RSV 12% 4PKS	\$ 29.00
BUNDY CAMPFIRE 8% RUM 4PKS	\$ 32.00
HARD RATED LEMON 6% 10PKS	\$ 50.00 – LOYALTY \$ 48.00
JACK DANIELS 10PKS	\$ 57.00 – LOYALTY \$ 55.00
JACK DANIELS AMERICAN SERVE 10PKS	\$ 70.00
SMIRNOFF VODKA RED 700ML	\$ 48.00
GORDONS GIN 700ML	\$ 50.00 – LOYALTY \$ 48.00
J/WALKER RED LBL 700ML	\$ 50.00 – LOYALTY \$ 48.00
JIM BEAM WHITE LBL 700ML	\$ 50.00 – LOYALTY \$ 48.00
MAKERS MARK BOURBON 700ML	\$ 62.00
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