

the aberdeen WHISPER

Established in Aberdeen | The Upper Hunter's Only Printed Publication

October 2026

www.facebook.com/aberdeenwhisper



UPPER HUNTER QUILT Adventure

Scone Arts and Crafts
17 & 18 October 2026
10am – 3pm

VENUE

Scone Arts and Crafts
63 Kingdon Street, Scone

- Morning Tea & Light Lunch
Lunch catered by the Wybong Hall Caterers
- Quilt Display – Front Hall
- Retail Outlets – Back Hall
- Miss Amy's School of Dance performance in the garden 11am Saturday only
- Pot House Open
- Selection of Market Stalls in the Garden
- Fundraising Raffle
Supporting Ovarian Cancer Research
Raffle prizes kindly donated by Pukara Estate and Two Rivers

ENTRY

\$5.00 per person
Children Under 12 free

ALL ENQUIRIES

0439 415 543
libertylibb@hotmail.com
Facebook: Liberty Rose



Whisper Trivia

1. What is the hardest natural substance on Earth?
2. The Renaissance began in which country?
3. What is the human body's largest internal organ?
4. What piece of equipment is central to the sport of curling?
5. What family of instruments includes the trumpet and trombone?
6. What is the name of Batman's loyal butler?
7. Which nut is used to make marzipan?
8. What is the largest living reptile?
9. What is a group of pugs called?
10. Who wrote "The Old Man and the Sea"?
11. Who created the sculpture "The Thinker"?
12. What does "URL" stand for?
13. In "Minecraft," what hostile creature explodes near players?



- Answers:
1. Diamond
 2. Italy
 3. The Liver
 4. The Stone
 5. Brass
 6. Alfred
 7. Almonds
 8. Saltwater Crocodile
 9. A Grumble
 10. Ernest
 11. Auguste
 12. Rodin
 13. Creepers

Business Directory

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Earle's Column

continued on page 9



It sometimes seems an 'age' between preparing contributions to the "Whisper". September included the wonderful victory of the Aberdeen Tigers 1st Grade team in the Minor Semi-Final at the end of August. Then they prevailed. But sadly, could not overcome Singleton in the Preliminary Final a week on.

But the Under-18 lads did!

Well done to the boys who took out the Grand Final on Sunday 6th September.

Commiserations to the Reserve Grade and Women's Tackle teams who fought hard to the end.

As I compose this, on Sunday 27th September, the NRL team that might claim some 'tribal' attachment, the Newcastle Knights, have continued their "rags-to-riches" journey all the way to the Grand Final against the Roosters on October 4th.

But perhaps one further indulgence from September before I move on. Jared's 949 grows significantly year on year. 2026 was the third happening of this very local event powered by the remarkable Kate Jones. ABC Upper Hunter conducted a live broadcast of their breakfast show, the 'ever-present' Aberdeen Lions pitched in and funds were raised to support 322 calls to the telephone counselling service, Lifeline from the Upper Hunter in the year ahead. For the second year running, Kate attracted support from Queensland in the form of rugby league 'legend', Wally Lewis, (the man every 'Blues' supporter loves to hate!) and from Victoria in Warren Davies, the "Unbreakable Farmer". Both of whom immersed themselves in the promotion of mental well-being and suicide prevention.

However, we don't, (or at least, we shouldn't!), drive looking in the rear-view mirror. October, the year end and 2027 are beckoning.



Wally 'held court' at the Commercial Hotel one evening, generously engaging with anyone willing to have a chat.

(There should be laws about shameless self-promotion!)

Citizens of the Year 2027

Nominations for the 2027 Aberdeen Citizens of the Year will open on Monday 5th October and close on Wednesday November 4th. Please understand that these dates are NOT negotiable. The UHSC Australia Day Sub-Committee - Aberdeen, Murrumbidgee and Scone Districts is scheduled to meet on Friday 13th November to make recommendations of awardees to forward to the November Ordinary Council meeting on Monday 30th November.

The Australia Day ceremony will be held at Murrumbidgee on Tuesday 26th January 2027.

The Lake Glenbawn Pumped Hydro Energy Storage Project

AGL has been out and about engaging with the Scone, Aberdeen, Gundy and Rouchel communities on the above proposal. In what may become a HUGE project, (AGL are saying the investment required will be in the billions of dollars. Construction would involve 'hundreds' of workers.), I think that there needs to be emphasis on the word 'become'. Despite some reasonably 'slick' marketing literature, it will take at least three, (3), years before this project gets to a point that construction, which is estimated to take a further six, (6), years, is approved and can begin. However, these next three years will be absolutely crucial for the community to carefully analyse the

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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WHISPER



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

Advertisements and Editorial - publications@huntervalleyprinting.com.au
or sconeadmin@huntervalleyprinting.com.au

EnergyCo

New England Renewable Energy Zone network infrastructure project

Environmental impact statement coming soon

EnergyCo is planning the New England REZ network infrastructure project to connect renewable energy to the electricity grid and deliver reliable power to homes and businesses across NSW.

The environmental impact statement (EIS) assesses how the project could impact people and the environment. The EIS will be open for feedback in the coming weeks.



New England Solar Farm, near Armidale

Learn more

Scan the QR code to visit energyco.nsw.gov.au/ne to learn about the project and EIS so you're ready to have your say.



Dave Layzell MP MEMBER FOR UPPER HUNTER

HOW I CAN HELP YOU

Upper Hunter Electorate Office

📍 94 John Street, Singleton NSW 2330

☎ (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



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

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Dungog
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Muswellbrook
Aberdeen
Scone

Broke
Branxton
Luskintyre
Lorn
Bolwarra
Maitland Vale

The Indian Myna Introduced Bird Problem *by Doctor Dirt*



INTRODUCED PEST
Indian or Common Myna
(*Acridotheres tristis*)

The Indian Myna "*Acridotheres tristis*" was introduced in 1860's to control insects in Melbourne market gardens. These birds like most of the introduced species have gone rogue across Australia. They are a problem in cities, urban areas, towns and rural landscapes.

These aggressive birds are highly invasive. They often congregate in large numbers and tend to roost in trees, leaving droppings everywhere and in large numbers are quite loud and noisy. They often nest in tree hollows, evicting native birds and animals from vital tree hollows, pushing native birds out of the area and killing chicks of other bird species. These introduced species often dominate the landscape with reduced tree hollows available and bird nesting sites, the proliferation of this bird is an environmental problem.

They relish food provided by humans and can be found in and around shopping centre's, schools, parks, sporting fields and rubbish bins. In the rural settings they can be found in numbers around, stock feeders for poultry farms, stables, dairy farms and feedlots. Where landholders feed birds and domestic pets these birds will often visit and push other birds away. They thrive on food waste, fruit, chicken feed, horse, cattle, goat and pig feed. Scavenging through domestic stock manure is a regular source of food for the Indian Mynas.

So, what can be done to control these introduced pest species. It requires coordinated community effort and a range of control methods to be used at the same time.

- Do not allow access to food scraps, place the scraps in a secure bin and make sure the bins are not overflowing. This will require Councils, Businesses, Sporting areas and Schools as well as residential to monitor bin capacities and schedule waste collection to prevent overflowing. This should not be just a weekly basis if the bins are full within days of collection.
- Improve the local habitat and landscapes to local providence range of native vegetation. If you have an area resembling London's Hyde Park and other European Parks, the result will be a habitat for introduced bird pests and a reduction of native birds and animals. There are a number of native birds that will challenge the Indian Mynas but if the native birds cannot live there this pest will thrive.
- A coordinated trapping program using specially designed Indian Myna traps.

There are over twenty-five NSW Regional Councils that have taken the effort to finance and coordinate Indian Myna control programs. These include adjacent Councils to the Upper Hunter Shire Council. Unfortunately, the local council has not joined the effort. Many NSW Landcare Groups are heavily involved in coordinating control activities, education and supply equipment in their areas. I am working with these Landcare groups on this problem pest.

There has been a number of posts on Scone Community social media regarding the Indian Myna problems. I have an Indian Myna trap which is now being replicated. These traps will soon be available with operation instructions.

Next month's addition I will provide further information on Indian Myna control. It is important that all native birds are caught inadvertently and they are to be released without injury. It is illegal to trap and kill native birds. I will cover how to release native birds in next month's article.

Supplied by Steve Eccles.

Steve Eccles - steveecclesconsulting@gmail.com
Mobile: 0400 808 873

Tigers Celebrate 2026 Award Winners



The Tigers celebrated their 2026 season at their annual Presentation Night, recognising the players, coaches, volunteers and supporters who contributed throughout the year.

In the Under 18s, Xavier Day was named Best Back and Player of the Year, while Bailey Chick received Best & Fairest. Tobey Stewart took out Best & Fairest and Players' Player in Women's Tackle, with Hallie Daniels named Tigress of the Year.

Mitch Comerford was named Reserve Grade Best & Fairest, while James Drayton received First Grade Best & Fairest. Matt Hay was named First Grade Player of the Year and Players' Player, with Tommy Dixon recognised as

Leading Try Scorer.

Club awards also recognised outstanding contributions, with Luke Foley named Clubman of the Year, Lily Cubillo Club Female of the Year, Jagah Hassleman Tiger with the Biggest Heart and Rowan Bateman receiving the Tiger Spirit Award.

The club thanked all players, families, volunteers, sponsors and supporters for helping make 2026 a memorable season, with attention now turning towards an even bigger 2027.

Supplied.

Aberdeen Author Turns Horse Country Into Inspiration

Local author Penelope Findlow is making her literary debut with an equine tale of resilience — and she's already working on a second novel set right here in Aberdeen.

For Aberdeen-based author and horse enthusiast Penelope Findlow, the Hunter Valley's rich horse culture has provided the perfect inspiration for her first novel, *Silver Sixpence*.

The independently published novel follows a champion Thoroughbred who wins the Melbourne Cup before a devastating paddock accident leaves him sterile and brings his promising stud career to an unexpected end.

But his story doesn't end there.

Determined not to give up on the former racing star, his owner sets out to retrain him as an elite Western Cutting horse — taking him from the glamour and speed of Flemington to the dusty, highly skilled world of stock horse competition.

For Penelope, the idea came naturally from her surroundings.

"Living in Aberdeen, right between Scone, the Horse Capital of Australia, and Muswellbrook, I am constantly surrounded by two very distinct horse worlds: elite Thoroughbred racing and gritty Western performance sports," she said. "With *Silver Sixpence*, I wanted to explore how true athletic genius can be pivoted from the explosive straight-line speed at Flemington to the sharp, cow-reading instinct required in a cutting arena."

Drawing on her love of horses and personal experience with local horses, Penelope aims to capture the realities of the equine world while exploring themes of identity, resilience and finding a second purpose in life. And *Silver Sixpence* may only be the beginning.

Penelope is already working on her next novel, *Honeymoon Lane*, which will be based in Aberdeen, NSW. With her debut bringing the world of horses to the page and her next story turning its focus towards her own hometown, Penelope is putting Aberdeen firmly on her literary map. *Silver Sixpence* is available through Amazon and Kindle in digital and print formats.

Supplied.



New Mayor and Deputy Mayor

Upper Hunter Shire Council has elected Cr Pat Ryan as Mayor and Cr Peter McGill as Deputy Mayor. Cr Ryan moves from the Deputy Mayor role, while outgoing Mayor Cr Maurice Collison will continue as a Councillor. Council thanked Cr Collison for his six years of service as Mayor and congratulated the newly appointed Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

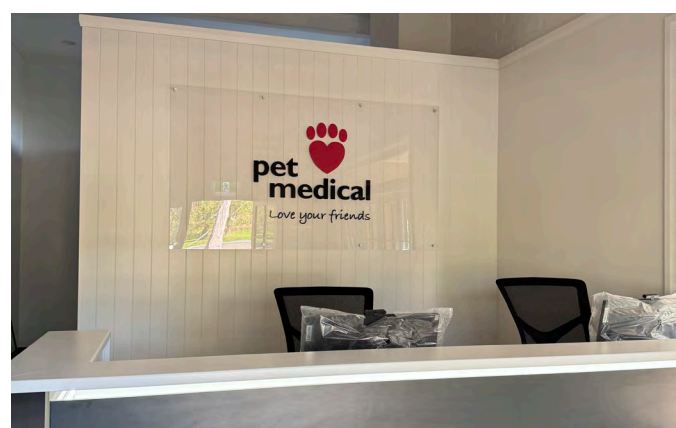
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PRINT SPOTLIGHT

Supporting local businesses through quality printing, signage and design

Pet Medical, Muswellbrook



Hunter Valley Printing was proud to work with Pet Medical in Muswellbrook to produce custom polycarbonate reception signage that gives their clinic a clean, professional and welcoming finish.

Designed specifically for the reception area, the polycarbonate signage provides a durable and polished display that complements Pet Medical's branding while helping create a clear and professional first impression for clients and their pets.

The crisp, high-quality finish of polycarbonate makes it a great option for busy reception environments, providing a practical signage solution that can withstand everyday use while maintaining a professional appearance.

This new reception signage adds a refined finishing touch to the clinic, helping Pet Medical create a consistent and recognisable environment for the local community and their four-legged patients.

At Hunter Valley Printing, we love helping local businesses bring their spaces and branding to life. From reception signage and wall graphics to vehicle signage, promotional products, brochures and banners, we create quality print solutions tailored to your business.

Project Snapshot

Client: Pet Medical

Industry: Veterinary / Pet Care

Products Produced: Custom Polycarbonate Reception Signage

Purpose: Professional reception branding and interior signage

Looking to give your business space a fresh new look?

Whether you need reception signage, wall graphics, business signage or promotional materials, Hunter Valley Printing can help bring your branding to life with quality print solutions.

Hunter Valley Printing | 02 6541 1358

Upper Hunter Wellbeing Week Coming in October

The Upper Hunter will come together from 26–31 October for Upper Hunter Wellbeing Week 2026, led by Upper Hunter Where There's a Will (WTAW).

With the theme "One Community. Leading the Way in Wellbeing," the week aims to encourage conversations about mental health and wellbeing and give community members the skills and confidence to support others.

Local schools including St Joseph's Catholic College Aberdeen, Scone High School, Muswellbrook High School, Merriwa Central School and Scone Grammar School are developing their own Wellbeing Week activities, led by WTAW Student Leaders.

The community program includes free Mental Health First Aid training, the WTAW Charity Golf Day, Socks That Start a Conversation Day, a community workout with CrossFit 2337, wellbeing morning teas and opportunities for organisations to make a public wellbeing commitment.

More than 1,200 WTAW socks have already been ordered by local businesses, schools and community organisations ahead of Socks That Start a Conversation Day on 30 October.

Community members are encouraged to get involved in whatever way they can, from hosting a morning tea or workplace activity to simply starting a conversation about wellbeing. Additional activities may be added to the program as local businesses, organisations and community members continue to get involved. For more information and program updates, visit Upper Hunter Where There's a Will online and follow their social media channels.

Supplied.



Schools & Education

OnStage Nominations for St Joseph's Catholic College

St Joseph's Catholic College, Aberdeen is celebrating the success of its talented Year 12 Drama students, with three students receiving OnStage nominations.

Anna, Cambria and Miley impressed markers with their Grecian-style group project, HerStory, while Anna and Cambria also received nominations for their individual monologues.

The three nominations are a fantastic achievement for the Year 12 Drama class and a proud moment for the students, their teachers and the wider St Joseph's community. Congratulations to Anna, Cambria and Miley on this wonderful achievement!

Supplied.

Council

September Council Meeting Highlights

Upper Hunter Shire Council met on Monday, 28 September, with community funding, infrastructure, finances and local facilities among the key matters discussed.

NEW MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR

Councillors elected Cr Pat Ryan as Mayor and Cr Peter McGill as Deputy Mayor, with both to serve until September 2028.

COMMUNITY FUNDING

Six projects were recommended for a combined \$110,550 through the Goulburn River Solar Farm Community Enhancement Fund. Funding includes \$30,000 towards heating the Merriwa Olympic Pool, \$35,000 for Merriwa Preschool flooring, \$10,000 for new cricket nets and \$5,000 towards a trailer for Merriwa Pony Club.

LIVERPOOL RANGE WIND FARM

Council received an update on the Liverpool Range Wind Farm, with construction planned for early 2027, subject to approvals and financial arrangements. Concerns included local roads, workforce accommodation, water supply and potential costs to Council and the community.

FUNDING AND POLICIES

Proposed changes to Federal Assistance Grants could increase Upper Hunter Shire's funding by approximately \$1.96 million compared with 2025/2026. Council also provided feedback on financial performance measures for rural councils.

Several policies were reviewed, including tree preservation, facility naming and external communications. A new Enforcement Policy is proposed to go on public exhibition from 30 September to 29 October.

LOCAL FACILITIES AND OTHER MATTERS

Council is considering greater community use of the Old Court Theatre in Scone, with proposed regular bookings for the Scone Community Shed and Scone Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Two Notices of Motion addressed the proposed firearm buyback scheme and privacy at Council swimming pools, including recording with smartphones, body cameras and smart glasses.

Council also resolved to progress matters relating to 47 Paradise Lane, Murrurundi, sell 7 Surman Street, Scone, and appoint Forsyth's Business Services as its preferred internal audit provider.

The full meeting agenda and recording are available through the Upper Hunter Shire Council website and YouTube channel.

Supplied.

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www.transcare.org.au

State Matters with Dave Layzell MP

P&C FEDERATION AWARDS

Nominations are open for the 2026 Parents and Citizens Federation Awards to celebrate and recognise the incredible dedication, achievements and positive impact taking place in public school communities across NSW.

Whether it is the contribution of a particular individual in your school community, your school's principal, or your P&C Association, the P&C Federation Awards are an opportunity to recognise these efforts and reward outstanding work.

There are three awards categories each with their own specific criteria including Association of the Year, Volunteer of the Year and Principal of the Year.

Submissions close Monday, 16 November, with full award criteria, eligibility requirements and nomination guidelines available at: www.pandc.org.au/awards/

RECYCLING CONSULTATION

The NSW Government wants input on Australia's first mandatory solar panel recycling scheme to ensure valuable solar panel materials are recovered, reused and recycled rather than sent to landfill.

Across the state there are more than 1.18 million rooftop solar systems are on homes, businesses, schools and community facilities. As the systems age, increasing numbers of solar panels are ending up in landfill. Around 14,000 tonnes of solar panel waste is generated in NSW each year and that is predicted to increase to 89,000 tonnes by 2045.

The proposed mandatory product stewardship scheme would require solar panel brand owners to take responsibility for the end-of-life management of their products, helping fund collection, recycling and resource recovery across NSW. Submissions on the draft regulation and issues paper are now open, so have your say by Monday 16 November at: <https://yoursay.epa.nsw.gov.au/solar>.

FUEL THEFTS CONTINUE

NSW Police Rural Crime Prevention Team has renewed a warning about rural fuel thefts which are on the rise again.

Nearly 10,000 litres of fuel have been reported stolen in just over six weeks, impacting farming operations and rural businesses across multiple Police Districts. Rural Crime detectives are urging landholders and rural businesses to again review the security of fuel stored on their properties.

Position fuel storage where suspicious activity can be seen from homes, sheds or public roads; install CCTV, lighting and alarm systems around fuel storage areas; and, maintain accurate records of fuel purchases, deliveries



and usage.

Importantly, report suspicious vehicles, persons or activity to police immediately.

Anyone with information regarding fuel thefts or suspicious activity around rural properties is encouraged to contact their local police station or Crime Stoppers NSW on 1800 333 000 and report criminal activity information at: <https://nsw.crimestoppers.com.au>

ADULT CRIME, ADULT TIME

A NSW Nationals and Liberals Government will introduce new Adult Crime, Adult Time laws within the first 100 days of Government, if elected in March next year. Under the Coalition's reforms, the list of serious children's indictable offences would be expanded, meaning maximum adult sentences would apply to additional serious crimes.

The offences would be backed by guideline sentencing and new sentencing principles to ensure detention is not treated as a last resort, especially where that applies to multiple sentences, and greater weight given to victim impact rather than the age of the offender.

The Coalition will also double funding for the Community Safety Investment Fund to \$10 million and fund expanded diversion, school suspension and post-detention rehabilitation programs to put young people back on the right track.

NSW Police do a great job keeping our communities safe, we need to back them with laws to ensure that serious youth offenders face proper consequences for violent crimes.

Families, business owners and older Australians in regional NSW have had enough of living with violent crime and kids running riot, so the NSW Nationals and Liberals will tackle serious youth crime through both prevention and consequences.

NOW ON TASK

AGL Energy's Liddell Battery Energy Storage System has reached full commercial operations this month, storing and dispatching energy to

power homes and businesses.

The Liddell Battery is one of Australia's largest grid-scale batteries and part of the four projects supported through Tender Round 2 of the NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap.

The projects represent more than \$1.8 billion of investment in NSW with additional support from the Australian Government, to bring forward private investment in the firming infrastructure the state needs to maintain reliability as coal-fired power stations retire.

AGL Chief Operations and Construction Officer, Matthew Currie, said the battery is the first major development at the former Liddell Power Station site and an important step in the company's plans to transform Liddell as part of its future Hunter Energy Hub. The new Liddell infrastructure is a 500-megawatt (MW) battery with storage capacity of 1,000 megawatt hours (MWh).

FEEDBACK SOUGHT, LITERACY HELP

Aberdeen and McCully Gap residents now have the opportunity to provide feedback to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure on proposed renewable energy projects.

The state significant development application for the Upper Hunter Battery Energy Storage System earmarked for Aberdeen is on public exhibition until Friday, 9 October. Comment on the McCullys Gap Battery Energy Storage System state significant development application is open until 13 October. The application, environmental impact statement and accompanying documents are available online at the On Exhibition tab: www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects

To have your say on these projects, you must lodge a submission online through the NSW Planning Portal before the close of exhibition.

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Applications are open for nine positions on the National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council for up to four years from 1 December 2026.

The Council advises the NSW Minister for the Environment and the Department on the management of national parks and reserves.

Applications are sought from people with expertise in areas including bushfire management, ecotourism, recreation, environmental education, regional development, planning and Aboriginal cultural heritage. Scientific and cultural heritage research qualifications are also sought. The Council meets around four to six times a year, with sitting fees payable. For more information and to apply, visit the NSW Environment website.

Supplied.

Contact:

94 John Street Singleton 2330
upperhunter@parliament.nsw.gov.au
6543 1065

Events

King and Queen Crowned at King of the Ranges

The King of the Ranges Stockman's Challenge & Bush Festival has just wrapped up in Murrurundi, bringing three days of Aussie bush skills, horsemanship and rural traditions to the foot of the Great Dividing Range. Held annually on the last weekend of September, the action-packed event attracts competitors, visitors and families from across the region to celebrate the skills and traditions of the Australian bush.

This year's Bengalla King of the Ranges crowned David Mitchell and Stoneage Jay as King, while Kelsie Lupson and Dances With Maggie took the Queen title. The event also saw Darryl Baines and Kelsie Lupson win the Marsh Carney Saddlery Wild Horse Catch, while John Mitchell took out the John Purcell Memorial Poley Buckjump.

For more results from this year's King of the Ranges, please check out their facebook page.

Supplied. Photograph by Emma Fiddler Photography.



Know When a Change to Your Skin Should Be Checked

Our skin can change over time, so it's important to notice when something looks or feels different.

Consider having a spot, mole or lesion checked if you notice:

- A new or changing spot
- Changes in size, shape or colour
- Bleeding, crusting or irritation
- A sore that isn't healing
- Anything else that concerns you

These changes don't necessarily mean skin cancer, but getting them checked can help determine if further monitoring or treatment is needed.

NEREZ Update

EnergyCo has given notice that a State significant infrastructure application for the New England Renewable Energy Zone (NEREZ) will be lodged with the Secretary of the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

The application is for network infrastructure project approval which proposes construction and operation of new 330kV and 500kV transmission lines, five energy hubs, associated infrastructure and ancillary works.

The project will connect NEREZ to the existing transmission network at Bayswater Power Station, near Muswellbrook. The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is due to be placed on public exhibition at the Department of Planning major projects portal in coming weeks.

Supplied.

Term 4 | 2026 Calendar

Children's Mobile Playgroup ~ 0-6 years of age

		MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
October	WEEK 1	12 McCullys Gap Hall	13 Denman St Josephs Hall	14 Gundy Showground	15 Murrurundi Public School	16 Cassilis Public School
	WEEK 2	19 Hebden Hall	20 Aberdeen Public School	21 Jerrys Plains School of Arts Hall	22 Merriwa St Josephs School	23 Wingen Hall
	WEEK 3	26 McCullys Gap Hall	27 Denman St Josephs Hall	28 Gundy Showground	29 Murrurundi Public School	30 Cassilis Public School
November	WEEK 4	2 Hebden Hall	3 Aberdeen Public School	4 Jerrys Plains School of Arts Hall	5 Merriwa St Josephs School	6 Wingen Hall
	WEEK 5	9 McCullys Gap Hall	10 Denman St Josephs Hall	11 Gundy Showground	12 Murrurundi Public School	13 Cassilis Public School
	WEEK 6	16 Hebden Hall	17 Aberdeen Public School	18 Jerrys Plains School of Arts Hall	19 Merriwa St Josephs School	20 Wingen Hall
	WEEK 7	23 McCullys Gap Hall	24 Denman St Josephs Hall	25 Gundy Showground	26 Murrurundi Public School	27 NO VENUE
	WEEK 8	30 Hebden Hall	1 Aberdeen Public School	2 Jerrys Plains School of Arts Hall	3 Merriwa St Josephs School	4 Wingen Hall
	WEEK 9	7 McCullys Gap Hall	8 Denman St Josephs Hall	9 Gundy Showground	10 Murrurundi Public School	11 Cassilis Public School
	WEEK 10	14 Hebden Hall	15 Aberdeen Public School	16 NO VENUE	17 Merriwa St Josephs School	18 Wingen Hall

Don't forget to bring your SUNHAT, DRINK BOTTLE (WATER), MORNING TEA, SUNSCREEN and wear ENCLOSED SHOES!

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✉️ Barnaby.Joyce.MP@aph.gov.au | 📘 BarnabyJoyceMP

BarnabyJoyce.com.au

Authorised by Barnaby Joyce MP, 17/454-456 Peel Street, Tamworth NSW 2340.

continued from page 2

proposal and to thoughtfully engage with the proponent and the planning authorities.

Currently, AGL are ‘scoping’ the project which will enable them to request the N.S.W. Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, (DPHI) to issue the “Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements”, (SEARS), which will detail the many components to be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement, (EIS). Assuming that AGL successfully lodges its Scoping Report, and there is progress towards SEARS and an EIS, it is extremely likely that the project will be granted State Significant Infrastructure, (SSI) status. This will mean that Upper Hunter Shire Council will have very little influence on the planning issues associated with the project.

In some quarters, 'pumped hydro' schemes are described as batteries. This is because they convert the 'potential' energy of higher-level stored water into 'kinetic' energy by allowing gravity to drain the water from one storage to another turning hydro-electricity turbines along the way. By its nature a project like this has a much longer lifespan than, say, the chemical batteries at the heart of the Aberdeen BESS. But as batteries go, it will not be as efficient, principally because there are evaporation and mechanical losses that are not present in Lithium-Ion batteries.

Councillors and senior staff have had a briefing from AGL. I also attended the drop-in session at Aberdeen on Wednesday 23rd September. I am not an engineer however, I have a number of concerns that must be positively addressed in the EIS to allay any community fears that the fantastic amenity of Lake Glenbawn, that is now approaching 70 years of age, remains available to a wide variety of community stakeholders including town water supplies, agriculture, recreation, tourism and the downstream users such as mining and other industrial and energy generating activities.

Aberdeen BESS

Finally, speaking of batteries, the EIS for the Upper Hunter Battery Energy Storage System, (the Aberdeen BESS), has now been placed on public exhibition for 28 days until Friday 9th October on the DPHI website. Granted, this is a limited timeframe but the exhibition period was announced after the September edition of the "Whisper" was published.

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/upper-hunter-battery-energy-storage-system>

I urge community members to engage with this project and if there are suggestions to improve the project or objections that need to be addressed. Please utilise this opportunity.

Well, that's it for this contribution – a bit of a “War and Peace” effort!

Supplied by Earle Shields.

Athletics

Little Athletics Registrations Open in Aberdeen

Registrations are now open for the 2026/27 Little Athletics season in Aberdeen, with the first session kicking off on Friday, 16 October at Harrison Oval, Jefferson Park.

Children and young people aged 3 to 18 years are welcome, whether they are new to athletics or returning for another season. The program offers a fun and friendly way to stay active, develop athletic skills and build confidence. Active Kids Vouchers are accepted.

Families can follow the Aberdeen Little Athletics Facebook page for registration details, updates and season announcements. The club looks forward to welcoming returning athletes and new faces to the track this season.

Supplied.



Murulla Rail Accident Remembered 100 Years On

The Upper Hunter community has marked 100 years since the tragic 1926 Murulla rail accident with the dedication of a permanent memorial at Burning Mountain. A centenary ceremony was held on Sunday at the Murulla Memorial, located on the New England Highway between Wingen and Blandford. The event was led by the Murrurundi Rail Committee and Transport for NSW, with assistance from Upper Hunter Shire Council.

On 13 September 1926, the North-West Mail passenger train was struck by runaway wagons near Murulla, claiming 27 lives and injuring around 40 people. It was the deadliest accident on the NSW rail network at the time.

The locomotive-shaped memorial, created by sculptor Fran Wachtel with stonework by Peter Morris, provides a permanent place to remember those who lost their lives, those injured and the people who helped survivors.

The ceremony was attended by NSW Minister for Roads and Regional Transport Jenny Aitchison, NSW TrainLink Chief Executive Roger Weeks and local representatives, who reflected on the tragedy and its lasting significance to the region.

Supplied.

Sports

The Latest on Vets Golf

MUSWELLBROOK GOLF CLUB AMBROSE EVENT

There were 38 players out on the course at Muswellbrook Golf Club for a novelty Ambrose event on a delightful spring day.

The event was organised by Captain Mick McCormick, with thanks to Beryl in the pro shop for preparing the starting cards. Players also enjoyed lunch from Pad Thai at the Muswellbrook Hotel.

Mark Lewis and Kerry McLennan took the honours with a score of 62-5. Second were Robert Ryan and Geoff Barton on 65-5, followed by Brian Edwards and Mick McCormick on 66-5, and Brett Dann and Bruce Hutchinson on 67-25.

Nearest the Pin winners were Mark Lewis (5th), Geoff Barton (8th), Tony Pearson (11th), Brian Edwards (14th) and Paul Constable (17th). The Bradman's Trophy was won by Arthur and Ian Cuttriss.

The club's Championships will be played at Aberdeen on 6 and 13 October, with a 2BBB and Individual Stableford at Scone on 20 October. From 6 October, games will start by 8.00am due to Daylight Saving. New members are welcome.

Supplied.



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Athletics

Archie Adds NSW All Schools Medal to Growing Collection

Local athlete Archie has continued his impressive run of results, taking home a bronze medal at the NSW All Schools Championships in Sydney. Competing in the Boys 15 Years Shot Put, Archie secured bronze on 29 September with a throw of 15.71m, adding another medal to an already successful month of competition.

Archie also competed in the Boys 15 Years Hammer Throw, finishing second with a throw of 48.27m. In the Boys 15 Years Discus, he recorded a 49.30m throw to finish seventh. The achievement follows a strong performance at the Combined Catholic Colleges (CCC) Championships on 16 September, where Archie achieved a full set of medals across three throwing events.

He claimed gold in the javelin, silver in the shot put and bronze in the discus, demonstrating his versatility across the field events. With medals now coming across multiple disciplines and competitions, Archie has plenty to celebrate.

Congratulations, Archie, on your fantastic achievements!

Supplied.



St Mark's Church: A History in Dates

Thank you to Denise Bell for sharing these fascinating historical details about St Mark's Church, Aberdeen. The history of the church reflects more than a century of faith, community and change in the town.

- 1838 – Church services were being held in Aberdeen, possibly at the old Mill.
- 1855 – The original St Mark's Church was erected. The wooden building, with a shingle roof, could seat 35 people.
- 7 October 1885 – The new Church of St Mark (the second church) was opened, replacing the original building.
- 7 July 1913 – The foundation stone for the third St Mark's Church was laid by Mrs J.C. White of 'Edinglassie'.
- 20 February 1914 – The new St Mark's Church was officially opened by Bishop Stretch.
- 7 July 1917 – The foundation stone for the Rectory was laid by Mrs W.S. Wilson, and the Church of England Rectory was consecrated by Bishop Stretch.
- 15 June 1918 – The new Church of England Rectory at Aberdeen was formally blessed.
- 1 December 1936 – The recently completed Children's Chapel was dedicated.
- 25 April 1952 – A War Memorial, consisting of a flagpole and Cross of St George, was dedicated in the grounds of St Mark's Church.
- 2 June 1953 – Coronation Drive was opened, providing a pathway from the Moray Street entrance to the western door of St Mark's.
- 30 May 2026 – St Mark's Church was deconsecrated.

There may be more significant dates to come, with further research still underway. These milestones offer a fascinating glimpse into the long and changing history of St Mark's and its place within the Aberdeen community.

Supplied.

Community

Memories of Frank

Paul Hobbs has captured a piece of Aberdeen's rural history in a poem remembering Frank Daley, his work with horses and his days as a drover.

Paul recalls visiting Frank when he returned from droving trips and helping him at the forge as he shod horses. He remembers watching closely so he could hand Frank the right tools as he worked.

The poem also recalls Frank's stories about horses, including Trixie and Champ, and the life of droving during the colder months.

MEMORIES OF FRANK

When Frank came home from a droving trip
I used to go over and help out a bit
Turn the forge when he was shoeing
I had to watch what he was doing
So as I could hand him the tools as they were needed
That showed that I had listened and heeded
He used the hammer the punch, the pincers and rasp
For shoeing horses was no easy task
Droving was better in the cold season
The tucker kept better was the main reason
Frank spoke of good horses like Trixie and Champ
And the night horses that were good in a camp
Champ was a jumper that could clear the gate
And Trixie won a draft at a very good rate
This is a story of long ago
that people today would not know
There is one thing I remember clearly
That is turning the forge for old Frank Daley.

Supplied by Paul Hobbs.

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.

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