

Douglas Shire News Newspport

PRINT

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Hold onto your cowboy hats, the fair is here...



Lucian, 10, Levi, 7, and Aaliyah, 8, are going to the Mossman school Country Fair on Saturday. Story, Page 8. Picture: Shaun Hollis

\$182m job boon

Shaun Hollis

Fresh details have been emerging about a massive 66-room resort and conference centre plan at Wonga Beach - including an estimated construction-cost price tag of \$182m - during the latest negotiations between the developers and planners to help get the project across the line.

On top of the huge cost to build the six-star eco-friendly Wonga Beach Resort complex, which is

expected to take 18 months to complete, development services company Kelly Reaston have stated about 370 jobs will be created during the construction phase.

The guest capacity is expected to be more than 200, and the plans include a restaurant, bar, huge resort pool, day spa and gym, and an Indigenous Interpretive Centre at 18 Oasis Drive, Wonga Beach.

Continued Page 7



When will Creb Track open? - P3

Do you use a blue cup? - P12

COSMOS
COCKTAIL LOUNGE



DETAILS CLASSIFIED..



MORE TO COME!

26-9 GRANT STREET PORT DOUGLAS

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Rate hike twice inflation

Shaun Hollis

Douglas Shire rates and charges are set to go up an average of 8.4 per cent this year, double Australia's annual inflation rate across the past year of 4.2 per cent.

Councillors rubber stamped the new 2026/27 Budget at a special council meeting on Tuesday morning - they have already taken part in at least two behind-closed-doors workshops to decide on the rate hike.

While individual rates notices are set to vary widely depending on a range of factors, which include a restructure of the DSC rating system and a long-awaited revaluation of many Shire properties by the State Government Valuer General, the council is budgeting to make more than \$4m out of rates and utility charges than was made last financial year.

Rates and other charges, such as water bills and rubbish-collection levies, are expected to bring in about \$52.4m in 2026/7, up from about \$48.4m in 2025/6.

In a statement accompanying the rate-hike announcement, the council outlines a series of figures



Douglas Shire has released its 2026/7 Budget.

to help justify the big average rise: "62 per cent of all residential properties (principle-place-of-residence) increasing in rates by \$81 or less - or \$1.55 per week," the report states.

"78 per cent of all investor properties (non-principle-place-of-residence) increasing in rates by \$117 or less - or \$2.25 per week.

"66 per cent of all commercial properties increasing in rates by \$174 or less - or \$3.35 per week."

Of course, this also means 38 per cent of people's home rates will increase by more than \$81 this financial year, 22 per cent of investment-property rates will increase by more than \$117, and 34 per cent of commercial rates will increase by more than \$174.

The council has scrapped

the residential rate category for homes with land values worth less than \$700,000 and increased the minimum yearly rate any Shire homeowner has to pay to \$1400.

For homes with a land value worth more than \$1.3m, the minimum rate is now \$8812, the minimum rate for investment homes worth less than \$1.3m is now \$1755, and the minimum rate for investment homes worth more than \$1.3m is \$10,172.

"(Consultant) Mead Perry Group was engaged to undertake an independent and extensive review of Council's Differential General Rates model," the report states. "Amendments included the rationalisation of rating categories, cents in the dollar were reduced, and the minimum differential rate adjusted, to ensure equity for ratepayers and that Council is financially sustainable."

Queensland rates are decided by councils setting a rate in the dollar for categories such as homes, investment properties, shops and farmland, then multiplying that by the value of the land as decided by the State Government.



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NEWELL VACANT BLOCKS

A new 21-block housing allotment at Newell Beach is a step closer to happening.

First proposed in September 2022, the estate, by Far North Development Group, is situated at 2 Andrews Street.

The 2.1ha project has been subject to several conditions imposed by planners in relation to the reduction of flood risks in the area.

As part of the proposed works, new drainage channels will be established and existing drainage channels widened.

FERRY FUND FILLING UP

Douglas Shire Council has started putting aside money into a reserve fund to help pay for the new Daintree ferry next year.

About \$290,000 has been put into a "Daintree ferry reserve" fund in this year's budget, with \$1m expected to go into the fund from next financial years' budget, and another \$1m from the 2028/9 budget.

OPERATING DEFICIT CALL

Douglas Shire Council is budgeting for an about \$600,000 operating deficit during the new 2026/27 financial year.

The 2026/27 annual budget details a capital works program of \$108m funded by \$80m of capital grant income, resulting in an about \$27m net cost to the council.

COP OPERATION ARRESTS

Far North police are continuing to target property offenders causing harm in the community, charging more than 500 people with 1228 offences as part of Operation Yankee Forge.

Operation Yankee Forge launched on February 27 to target high-harm and high-volume offences, including unlawful use of motor vehicles, unlawful entry and robbery.



Tony "Toxi" Bartels at the Daintree River crossing last week. Picture: Shaun Hollis

Creb Track fix a month away

Shaun Hollis

Daintree Village locals are aiming for the official opening of the world-famous Creb Track four-wheel drive road to take place in mid July, weather permitting.

With a big wet season, and rain still falling this week, the Daintree River crossing at the start of the track has still been covered in water, but Douglas Shire Council workers started fixing that and the road along the hill on the other side, which was also washed away.

The opening has been delayed more than a month past last year's, which took place in June.

Tony "Toxi" Bartels, who runs

a vehicle recovery service for drivers who break down, said the council was doing its best to clear the track from both the northern and southern ends.

"You can't help the delay because, when it all comes down to it, we are all just run by the weather," Toxi said last week. "It depends on the wet season, sometimes we can get a big wet season and sometimes we don't get much."

Visiting the crossing last week, Toxi was impressed with the work being done at the southern end.

"It's good to see that the council's getting into it and getting the road open for us all," he said.

"Get the tourists up this way and get them through the track and experience what we've been experiencing for a very long time, an absolutely awesome track."

Toxi also visited the northern end this month, but could only travel about 4km before finding fallen trees and washed-out culverts. He is looking forward to the official track opening, with a party planned in Daintree Village including bands and market stalls.

"It will be a good day out in the village."

The DSC stated last week repair crews have been making "solid progress" at both ends of the about 70km track.



NEXT BUSINESS MEETING

St Crispins Cafe - 24th June, 7am
Guest speaker: Wendy Morris

ST. CRISPINS

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Upgrading Cairns Western Arterial Road



As well as upgrading Cairns Western Arterial Road, here are some of the ways the new Queensland Government is delivering for Far North Queensland:

- Delivering new classrooms at Cairns State Special School
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- Upgrading the lighting at Cooktown Oval
- Upgrading Barlow Park and the Manunda Sports Precinct for 2032 and beyond
- Delivering public transport for Babinda, Dimbulah and Ravenshoe
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Quickies gives the nod

Shaun Hollis

Reef tourism operator Quicksilver has thrown its weight behind a new Port Douglas marine-industry-precinct plan for the south wharf area.

Quicksilver Group managing director Tony Baker said he welcomed a recent State Government announcement of a \$300,000 scoping study to see if the precinct - which would likely include a boat-repair centre, shops and cafes near the Port Douglas Yacht Club - would be viable.

"It's encouraging to see support for a business case into the development of a marine precinct here in Port Douglas," Mr Baker said.

"A dedicated local maintenance and marine services facility would provide significant benefits for the region, supporting the many commercial and private vessels operating locally while also attracting skilled trade jobs and creating long-term employment opportunities.

"Following the closure of the Mossman Mill in 2024, projects

such as this are especially important in helping diversify the local economy and strengthen future employment in the region."

The project is expected to include a smaller travel lift than the 5000-ton one planned for Cairns, which would cater for a niche market of reef boats and private vessels not currently being serviced there.

With the navy now leading the development of the Cairns boat-building industry, there is a need for Port Douglas to fill that

market, Port Douglas project backers told Newsport.

This will provide jobs in shipyard services such as diesel fitting and electrical services, helping to bring back skilled workers lost to the region after the mill closed down, they said.

And a new shop precinct would also be expected to provide more local jobs.

The marine precinct scoping study is expected to be completed within about four months.

World cup wonders awaiting

As the soccer World Cup hits full stride in the US, Canada and Mexico, a pair of Douglas Shire locals are celebrating the sporting fans' trip of a lifetime.

Michael Perry and friend Daniel O'Brien are in North America for the world's biggest sporting event, and are all set to meet up this Saturday (Australian time) to witness Australia take on the main tournament host the US in Seattle.

"I'm pumped, can't wait, counting the days," Perry told Newsport before he flew out.

"It's just the whole experience, the atmosphere, the World Cup."

Australia will have to be on its game after the US trounced Paraguay 4-1 in their first match in front of a parochial home crowd.

You can watch the game this Saturday at 5am on free-to-air TV.



Port Douglas local Mike Perry is meeting his friend Dan O'Brien in the US to watch Australia play the US at the FIFA World Cup. Picture: Shaun Hollis



Mossman Show Ball

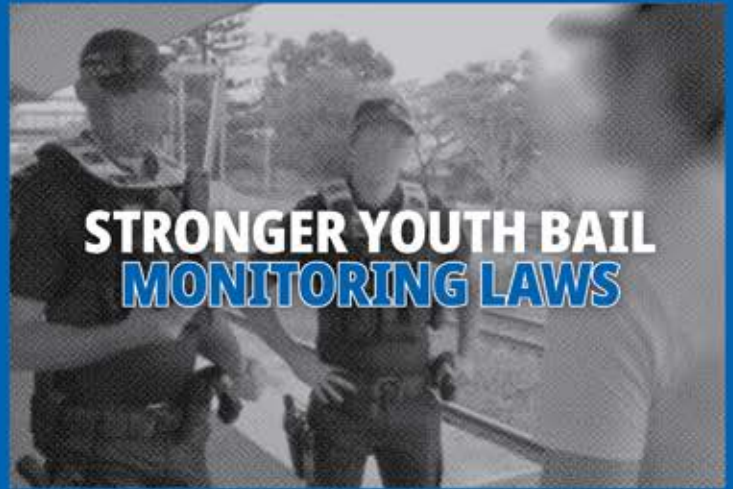
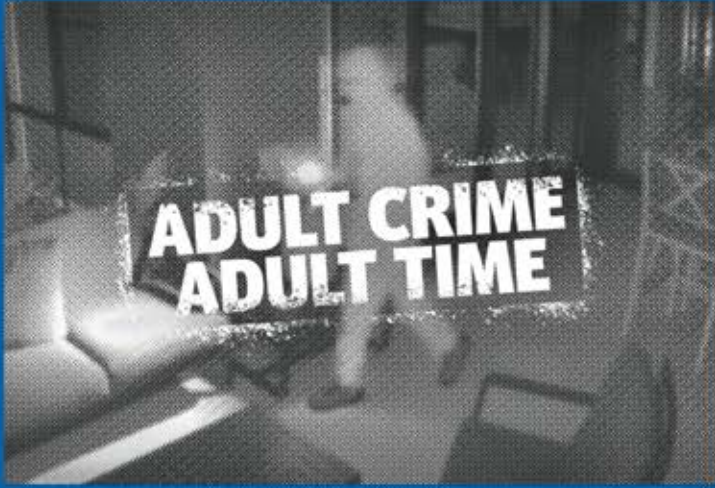
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Queensland Government

Big money for project

From Page One

Ongoing operations are projected to generate about \$50m per year, including about \$12m per year in wages and salaries for about 150 full-time-equivalent jobs.

In terms of the people behind the development, the landowners are a private Australian company called 18 Oasis Street Pty Ltd, registered in NSW in September, 2023.

Revised plans for the resort were submitted to Douglas Shire Council at the start of this month.

"The project will support economic diversification within the northern Douglas Shire following the closure of the Mossman Sugar Mill," the plans state.

"The resort operates predominantly on on-site renewable energy, with a moderate grid connection and backup generator."

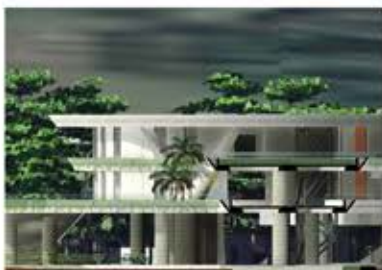
This includes 66 resort apartments in 33 villas, with road access via Oasis Drive connecting to Wonga Beach Road.

The maximum number of people expected on site during peak times is more than 450, which includes guests, conference attendees, restaurant-goers, bar staff, spa workers and housekeepers.

"This level of occupancy would only occur during major holiday periods, conference events and peak tourism seasons," the plans state.

The total car movements on this type of peak day would be about 500.

"The proposed 66 apartment tourist resort at Oasis Drive, Wonga Beach, is expected to generate a moderate increase in traffic rel-



Different views of the Wonga Beach Resort plan. Pictures: Supplied

ative to the existing residential environment," according to the plans.

"The project directly responds to an identified shortage of premium accommodation and wellness-based tourism experiences identified within the Port Douglas Daintree Destination Tourism Plan 2025."

During the about 18-month construction period, the development is expected to generate more than \$160m in economic output and more than \$30m in wages and salaries.

The building has been designed

by Charles Wright Architects on about 2400sq m to provide a "unique and high-end accommodation experience".

"The project is for a world-class, luxury, six-star resort comprising 66 architecturally designed holiday villas, each carefully sited to optimise privacy, outlook, and integration with the natural landscape," the plans state.

"A central building precinct forms the heart of the project and incorporates conference facilities, a lagoon-style pool, spa and wellness facilities, bar and restaurant

offerings, and a dedicated interpretive centre. The Wonga Beach Resort has been intentionally conceived as a six-star, climate-positive tourism destination."

The development is planned at the former sites of Oz Oasis Resort, Redbacks and Daintree Palms, with those buildings being demolished a number of years ago.

The plans have generated considerable online debate among Wonga Beach and the wider Douglas Shire area residents since they were first released in December.

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Queensland Government

All the fun of the fair coming to Mossman

Shaun Hollis

Yeehaw!

It has been a lot of work bringing it all together, but the organisers of the Mossman school country fair are excited the day is nearly here when children and parents alike can celebrate in style this Saturday.

Mossman State School organising committee member Karly Scomazzon says there will be something for everyone at the Country Fair at the school from 2-9pm.

"There's going to be pickle-eating competitions, corn-eating competitions, wheelbarrow races, a rooster-crowing competition, live music from 5pm, bar from 3pm, there's going to be lots of great food vans, farm animals, pony rides, massive inflatable obstacle course and showbags," Karly says.

"We're excited for it, but I'll be glad when it's done."

She says the preparations have



Lucian, 10, Levi, 7, and Aaliyrah, 8, are going to the Mossman school Country Fair on Saturday. Picture: Shaun Hollis

taken a lot of effort, but hopefully it will all be worth it when the community comes together on the weekend: "It's been a lot of work, nearly there."

The good news is, the event rotates between schools in the

district, so Mossman school volunteers will have a few more years until they have to organise their next one.

Mossman State School Country Fair is on Saturday, June 20, 2-9pm, Mossman state school.

Ambo station to be demolished and then rebuilt

Mossman is receiving a replacement ambulance station on the main street where the current one now sits.

The new station and relief quarters will be built in stages so that ambulance services are not interrupted during the construction phase.

The existing Front Street ambulance station has reached the end of its life and is no longer fit for purpose, according to plans submitted to the council.

The new relief quarters will include two bedrooms, two en-suites, a combined living, dining and kitchen area, and a carport.

The existing station building at the front of the site will be demolished, with the new station building to be located in the centre of the site with a combined living, dining and kitchen area, training room, office, study, storeroom and deck area.

A new five-car carpark and more landscaping are also included in the plans.

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Rise was predicted

Bryan Littlely

The Douglas Shire Ratepayers Association this week expressed concern the council would introduce large rate and charge increases in the budget in what will be a big hit for local business.

A soft tourism season and farmers still in the grips of transitioning from the cane industry, with residents also struggling under the weight of cost-of-living pressures and increasing mortgage interest rates, will compound the impact of the rise, the association heads said.

DSRA president John Sullivan expressed concern at the increases and encouraged the council to act like all other businesses and families in the Shire and look at efficiencies within the organisation, and to actually reduce its operating costs, rather than continuously increasing rates.

"We are in tough times, and it is time for (the) council to consider its operational costs," Mr Sullivan said.

The concerns were heightened by the fact that on March 31 the council adopted a revised budget paper with forward estimates for the 2026/2027 year showing big increases.

This predicted fees and charges receipts increasing from about \$48m in 2025/2026 to about \$52m in 2026/2027, an increase of 7.1 per cent, and employee benefits rising from about \$22m in 2025/2026 to about \$24m in 2026/2027, an increase of 9.3 per



John Sullivan

cent. "These are very big increases and considering the big increase in employee benefits it appears that council is considering increasing what is already a very large workforce for a relatively small council," he said.

The second revised budget recognised changes since the first revised budget was adopted on November 25.

Severe weather from Low 29U wiped out the favourable operating adjustments of \$1.8m, which would have seen the council move from a \$0.42m deficit to a \$1.38m surplus.

Counter disaster operations and emergent works resulting from severe weather from Low 29U were estimated to have an unfavourable (\$1.8m) 25/26 in-year impact.



Humpback whales are migrating from the south. Picture: Hallie Evans

Having whale of time

Whales have started their annual pilgrimage up Australia's East Coast towards Far North Queensland.

Douglas Shire reef tour companies are excited about the prospect of the new whale season, which runs from June to November, finally arriving.

An estimated 35,000-50,000 humpback whales are expected

to migrate up the coast from May, while several other varieties including dwarf minke and rare Omura's whales can also be spotted by whale watchers.

The humpback whales head from Antarctica to seek the warmer waters of Queensland's coast every year, including mothers teaching their calves about survival skills.



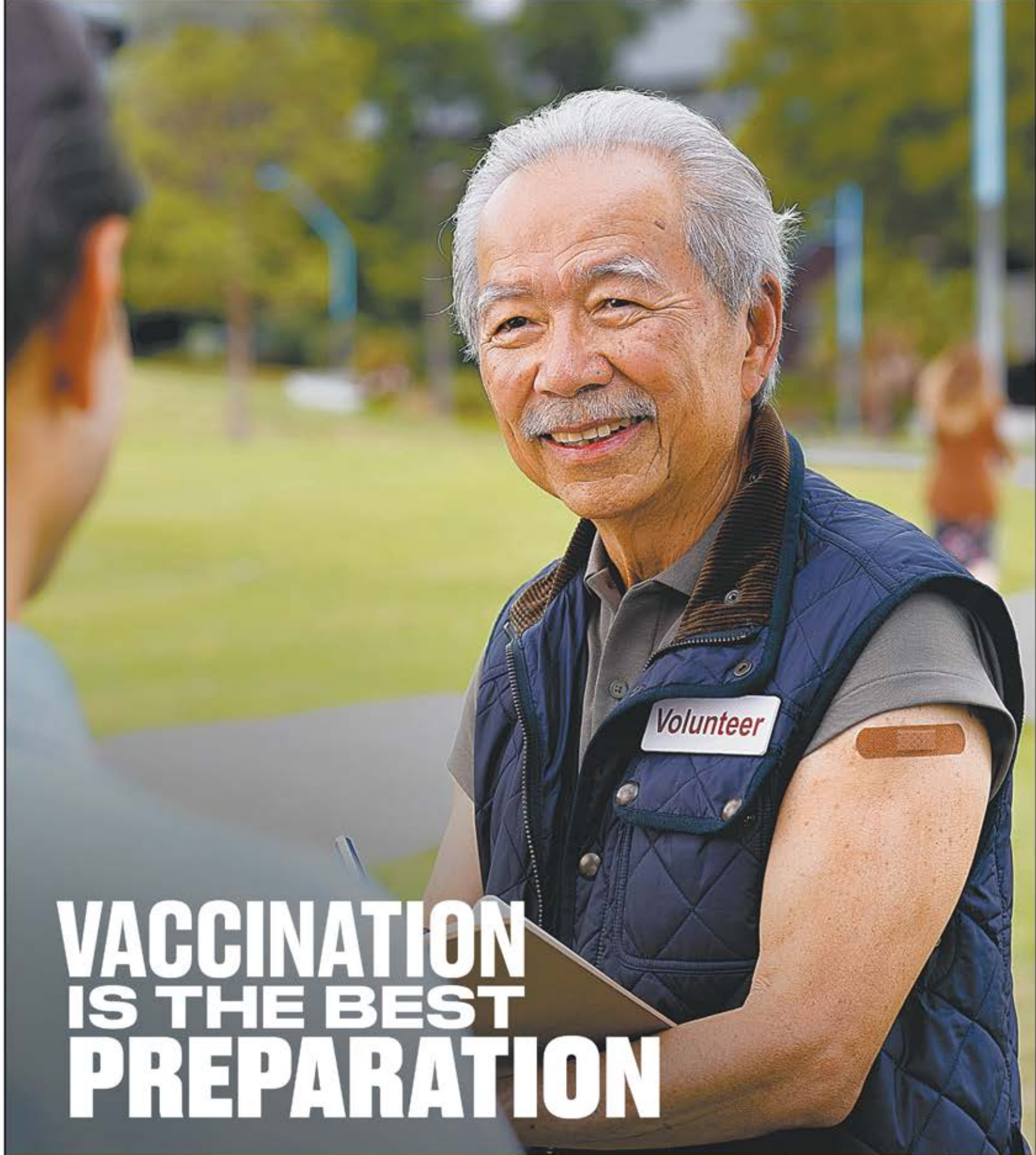
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Toyah's murder appeal date set

Shaun Hollis

A Court of Appeal date has been set in the Toyah Cordingley murder case for Tuesday, October 13.

Former Innisfail nurse Rajwinder Singh was convicted by a jury in December of Ms Cordingley's murder at Wangetti Beach, but lodged an appeal in January against the conviction and sentence.

The case is now set to be heard by a trio of Supreme Court Justices in the Court of Appeal in a little under four month's time.

Mr Singh was sentenced to life imprisonment with a 25-year non-parole period for the murder of Ms Cordingley nearly eight years ago.

The about one-month-long trial culminated with the jury handing down a unanimous guilty verdict after approximately seven hours of deliberation.

A former Paws and Claws animal shelter volunteer, Ms Cordingley was murdered on the afternoon of Sunday, October 21, 2018, at the remote beach, about 30km south of Port Douglas.

Her body was found buried in a shallow grave at the beach the next day by her father Troy.

A retrial took place after Singh's original trial earlier last year ended in a hung jury.

In December, the nine men and three women decided Mr Singh was guilty and he was sentenced by Justice Lincoln Crowley.



Former Paws and Claws volunteer Toyah Cordingley was murdered at Wangetti Beach in 2018.

10 YEARS AGO

Quicksilver set to jump ship from reef marina

Quicksilver has bought the Closehaven Marina and could leave the Reef Marina on the eve of its proposed multi-million dollar redevelopment.

The reef giant announced in a statement this morning the purchase of Closehaven Marina site, near the Port Douglas Yacht Club, from prominent local businessman John Morris for an undisclosed amount.

The news could have implications for a number of separate issues likely to influence the town including:

- the \$100m development to The Reef Marina
- the placement of the Port Douglas fishing fleet
- the outcome of the state owned lot 96 adjacent to the Closehaven Marina
- separation of the town's major reef operations, and;
- movement of private berths from Closehaven Marina.

It's believed the Reef Marina and Quicksilver have been in negotiations for several months regarding the marina lease. The Closehaven Marina is one of the few prime waterfront properties left in Port Douglas with a 35-berth capacity.

"As a company we at Quicksilver are very focused on continuing to be a driving force in attracting tourism to the region," Tony Baker, Quicksilver group managing director, said.



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Recycle scheme winner

More than 10,000 single-use cups and lids have stayed out of landfill because of the landmark Douglas Chooses to Reuse project.

The project was introduced about a year ago with funding to start the trial provided by the State Government.

Spearheaded by Boomerang Alliance, the project has rolled out a free reusable cup system across Port Douglas, providing customers with bright blue cups they can borrow and return for free at any participating cafe.

Environment Minister Andrew Powell said the scheme had already delivered meaningful change.

"The Douglas Chooses to Reuse project is a practical step toward cutting down single-use waste," Minister Powell said.

"After just a year, it's great to see the trial. And driven by local



Nourish Cafe worker Avelina Mooney with one of the recyclable blue keep cups. Picture: Shaun Hollis

cafes, demonstrating that a reuse cup system can work."

Customers ask for their takeaway coffee in the reusable cup, enjoy their drink, then return it to any participating cafe or one of the dedicated return pods located around town. The cups are commercially washed and sanitised and sent back out to cafes to be used again.

There are no sign-ups and no deposit - just use it and return it. Australians use a mind boggling

4.4 million single-use coffee cups per day - that's about 1.6 billion a year.

They're only used for a few minutes on average, then discarded. Not readily recycled or composted, they often end up as litter or landfill.

Six local cafes are currently participating: Origin Espresso, The Surfy, Nourish, Toast Sandwich Bar and Cafe Ziva. For more information go to plasticfreeplaces.org/douglas.

Could the Amish have answers for Douglas ag?

Fourth generation sugar farmer David Rutherford has joined the chorus of concern for the future of the Douglas district in the wake of the collapse of the sugar industry.

But at age 88, and prompted by a proposal raised by Phil Carlon for biofuel production, David has an out of the blue suggestion taken straight from the playbook of the Amish people.

In a letter to Newsport, David said: "Since the closure several public forums have suggested similar fuel formats to Mr Carlon's but they all entail several years of establishment before any dollars roll in and I don't think that many farmers have the wherewithal to survive those types of time frames. One proposal that hasn't been spoken of that often is the industrial hemp industry, which in some other countries covers a diverse product range from fuel right through to building material. I do believe that the Amish people in USA are able to convert their industrial hemp to produce the fuel that they require for themselves."

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Bidding opens for 'best job in world'

Photomontage of tourism views in solar-farm query

The owners of a proposed new solar farm on Captain Cook Highway near the Killaloe dump turn-off have been asked to provide detailed new drawings of the visual impacts of the panels at years zero, three and five from different angles before council planners will consider the proposal further.

The development, on farmland owned by the Noli family at 6868 Captain Cook Highway, was first proposed before April as a 7ha solar farm near Vic's Nursery, and was supported by Douglas Shire councillors in principle, as long as a series of requests are met.

The application has since been withdrawn and resubmitted, with the latest request for information due by August 6. The plan has prompted debate about how prime farming land should be used in the wake of the closure of the Mossman Mill and the transition away from sugar-cane farming. In the latest information provided by the developers, they justify the need for the farm in those terms.

"As Queensland's second largest agricultural export, the sugar milling industry has played an influential role in the employment and economic wellbeing of regional communities and population growth in Douglas Shire," they said. "Now, Douglas Shire is undergoing a significant transition period as a consequence of the retirement of the Mossman Sugar Mill that has left an abundance of former cane land vacant.

"There is an immediate need to diversify the Shire's economic base."

The council has also requested a photomontage, views from scenic routes and an assessment of likely impacts on views.



Low Isles is a popular destination for tour groups. Picture: Windswell

Bryan Littlely

IT has been dubbed the "best job in the world" and locals who know and love the Low Isles are not likely to disagree.

The Reef Authority and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service are seeking caretakers to live and work on Low Island, part of Low Isles in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

The role looking after Low Island and Woody Island, about 15km northeast of Port Douglas and 60km north of Cairns, is described as "a unique opportunity, but not a holiday".

Low Isles is jointly managed and protected by the Reef Authority and QPWS through the Reef Joint Field Management Program.

Caretakers live on Low Island and help protect its environmental, cultural and historical values.

The successful candidates will be busy doing grounds maintenance, vegetation management, buildings and off-grid systems maintenance and repairs, visitor education, and monitoring compliance with the marine-park rules.

"The role is physically demanding and requires people who are practical, resourceful and com-

fortable living off-grid in a remote tropical environment," the advertisement says.

The tender is now open for businesses to make a submission. Potential suppliers are encouraged to read the tender details, role requirements and frequently asked questions before applying.

The public tender "Low Isles Caretaker Services" is open through VendorPanel. A public tender is a formal process used by government to select a business or supplier to deliver goods and services under a contract.

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SLEEPERS

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Hotels, Resorts & Suites

New chef brings fresh tropical spin

BUSINESS FEATURE

Jamie Jansen

Perched high in the treetops overlooking the Coral Sea, Osprey's Restaurant at Thala Beach is already one of the region's most special hidden gems. Now, there's an extra reason to visit: new head chef Adele Dailler has arrived, bringing a vibrant, seasonal menu inspired entirely by the tropics.

Adele isn't just any chef. She brings nearly 15 years of experience from fine dining restaurants, luxury hotels, and bistros, including running her own venue back in France.

In designing the new menu at Osprey's, Adele wanted to showcase her signature culinary style while honouring the rich local flavours of Tropical North Queensland.

"My French background has shaped the way I cook, with a strong focus on quality ingredients and simple flavours," Adele said.

"The new menu reflects my own style while celebrating the incredible produce available in Tropical North Queensland.



New head chef Adele Dailler brings nearly 15 years of global experience to Thala Beach. Picture: Supplied

"The result feels fresh, honest, and rooted in both the destination and my own culinary journey."

For a chef, the unique setting of Thala Beach is a dream playground.

"Working here is inspiring because we are surrounded by nature and have access to an incredible kitchen garden," Adele says.

"We use the produce around us, from our own garden's zucchini, basil, dragon fruit, and coconuts, to avocados and beef from the Tablelands. Combining on-site

produce with seasonal ingredients from local suppliers allows us to create fresh dishes that truly reflect the region."

The local environment has given the French chef plenty of room to experiment and expand her palate.

"The ingredients here are incredible and constantly inspire new ideas," she said.

"Barramundi is a standout for me, and I love finger limes for that unique burst of freshness.

"Coconut fascinates me, too,

there are so many stages and expressions of it, and we're currently exploring new ways to showcase its versatility."

To get a taste of what's on offer, Adele recommends starting with the local Barramundi to taste one of the region's most iconic catches. And for the perfect finish?

"The White Chocolate Coconut Ganache is made using coconuts grown right here at Thala, making it a true reflection of our surroundings."

Ultimately, Adele wants the environment to guide the dining experience, letting the local ingredients speak for themselves with minimal interference between the garden and the plate.

"Above all, I hope guests feel connected to the environment around them," she says.



To read the full story scan this QR code

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Record international CIAF lineup

BUSINESS FEATURE

Jamie Jansen

A historic timber mill in Stratford, Cairns, is set to become the epicentre of global Indigenous style at the opening of the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair, which will run from July 9-12.

CIAF, one of Australia's premier celebrations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture, is set for its largest-ever fashion line-up. Now in its 17th year, the massive, city-wide festival brings stories to life through dance, theatre, masterclasses, and contemporary fashion.

While the heart of the festival remains at the Tanks Arts Centre, this year's CIAF Fashion Performance is branching out to The Mill, a rugged, industrial timber site on Yirrganydji Country.

The 75-minute production functions as a live performance piece where garments are presented as wearable fine art.

Under the theme "Reclamation and Regeneration", the showcase integrates contemporary garment design with choreographed movement, live music, and digital projections to convey narratives of cultural identity, climate resilience, and healing.

The lineup features 24 designers, including three Indigenous Taiwanese designers sharing ancestral needlework and guest designers from Indigenous Fashion Week New York, who will share the stage with Queensland's finest local talent and collectives.

To honour this growth, CIAF is introducing its inaugural Fashion: Textile and Design Awards.

Featuring \$20,000 in prize money across categories like Textile Innovation, winners will be an-



Model Shamaiah Sullivan in fashion by FNQ designers Irene Robinson and Darlene Fell of 2 Sistas Strong. Picture: Blueclick Photography

nounced on Friday, July 10, judged by a panel of industry leaders.

While fashion unfolds in Stratford, the main hub at Tanks Arts Centre kicks off early on Tuesday, July 7, with *The Boy Who Found His Way Home* by Jillian Boyd-Bowie, a one-night-only theatre work celebrating Torres Strait Islander identity, starring acclaimed actor Jimi Bani.

Following the preview, the official Opening Night on Thursday, July 9, launches CIAF's largest-ev-

er Art Fair Showcase and Artisans Market.

Headlined by award-winning dance troupe Naygayiw Gigi, the site-wide celebration features immersive cultural activations and curated food experiences across the Tanks precinct.

The hub then opens fully from Friday, July 10, to Sunday, July 12, debuting new intergenerational spaces like the Puuna Play Space and the "Elders Lounge" (Welcome Blak Home) for yarn-

ing over tea and classic vinyl. Visitors can also dive into the "Mark Makers" program, featuring hands-on masterclasses in traditional shell necklace making and ancestral Paiwan embroidery.

Talks & Masterclasses Program Friday July 10

Blak Douglas keynote: *Blak Portraits and the Archibald Prize* (11am to noon, Tank 5)

Sabrina Toby: *Nature's Jewellery* (10.30am to 1pm, Botanic Garden Visitors Centre /BGVC)

Carly Wallace: *Traditional Raffia Weaving* (2pm to 4.30pm, BGVC)

Saturday July 11

Sigesile Kalidoai: *Needlework of the Ancestors* (10.30am to 1pm, BGVC)

Luke Currie-Richardson keynote: *Dancing in Between Worlds* (11am to Middy, Tank 5)

Alapiyac Parucunuq: *Paiwan Bead Embroidery* (2pm to 4.30pm BGVC)

Sunday July 12

Vicki Newie: *Adornment and Connection: A Shell Necklace Workshop* (10.30am to 1pm, BGVC) Elverina Johnson keynote: *Reclaiming our Narratives through Regeneration of our Storytelling* (11am to Middy, Tank 5)

For the full program, visit: ciaf.com.au/ciaf-2026-fashion-performances.

For tickets, visit: ciaf.com.au/ciaf-2026-ticketing-hub.



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Roads and health top priorities

BUSINESS FEATURE

MP Matt Smith

The Cairns Western Arterial Road duplication has received a further commitment of over \$166m in the Federal Budget so that we can get on with helping Cairns locals get home quicker and safer.

That stretch of road between Lake Placid and Smithfield was inundated and impassable during the floods post Cyclone Jasper and we can't allow for that to happen again.

It will, of course, take some time, but we're confident that the Queensland Government and TMR will now be ready to get the work started, with the first phase projected to be completed in time for the 2032 Olympics.

Urgent Care Clinics

The Edmonton Urgent Care Clinic has been going from strength to strength delivering essential health care for folks on the Cairns south side, and the Budget has now funded both of our Urgent Care Clinics to remain permanently as part of Medicare.

Meanwhile, the new north side Urgent Care Clinic in Smithfield



Matt Smith chats with constituents at Cape Trib. Picture: Supplied

has already clocked up a staggering 2500 patient visits since the doors opened only two months ago. It's great to see that the need has been fulfilled for those Northern suburbs and the locals are going there when they need to.

For residents in the Douglas Shire, having the UCC in Smithfield makes them 20 minutes' drive closer to professional health care than driving all the way to Cairns Hospital. Labor recognises the importance of Medicare and

its significant role keeping all of us as healthy as possible.

With 53 fully bulk-billed general practices across the electorate, the two (permanent) Urgent Care Clinics, a walk-in Medicare Mental Health Clinic on Mulgrave Road, and cheaper prescriptions for all, the Government is doing everything in our power to look after every Australian's health, both inside and out.

Contact me: I always value hearing your voices, and if you

want to get in touch with my team at any time, you can call us on 07 4051 2220, email matt.smith.mp@aph.gov.au or feel free to pop into the office at 200 Mulgrave Road where my friendly and helpful staff will be on hand to help you out.

If you want to follow my movements more closely you can find me online at my website MattSmithMP.com or my social media feeds "Matt Smith MP" across Facebook and Instagram.

Until the next time, look after one another, and I'll look forward to catching up again soon.

*Matt Smith is the Federal MP for Leichhardt. The opinions and views in this column are those of the author and author only and do not reflect the Newsport editor or staff.



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SATURDAY 20TH JUNE

HOME GAME

GAME



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Come support our home game this weekend!

Saturday 20th of June

NEW CHOPPER BASE SET FOR TAKE OFF

Laurene Hull

Shame about negative impact on birdlife and spectacled flying fox. Let's hope the re-negotiated flight path is adhered to, and the frequency of take off and landing is regulated.

Greg Spencer

A sensible and practical approach and departure flight route change. Critical tourism infrastructure.

Michelle Simone

So glad they managed to get approval although it has taken some time. and it should not cause any more noise over the town as currently it takes off and lands near The Sheraton green next to the cemetery.

Dianne Harper

More bloody noise in town!

Lisa Lopez

How and WHY would helicopters want to dangerously link in with the ALLEGED new shipyard? Who the hell are we expecting here while everybody is trying to have lunch, dinner or enjoy the region??

ONE NATION IS FLYING... BUT FOR HOW LONG?

Cuppy Johnston

Not for long the surge is going down not up.

Micko More

Now the opposition.

Chrissy Geyer

Pauline Hanson represents the

worst of Australians. I understand people are not happy with everything the government does, but at least they have a plan. All One Nation has is Pauline the divisive, mega whinger with no plans at all. Every policy put forward is a farce, with no costings.

Dave Ohgh

Can you blame a population for looking elsewhere? Both the ALP and the LNP have gifted this once great country with a trillion dollars of debt with no plan to start reversing it. They both signed over our sovereignty to unelected international organisations without our consent who don't have Australia's best interests at heart. I for one won't be voting for any party that has proven themselves unworthy of our trust. Time for change.

Moo Man

One Nation doesn't have to do anything to make them popular, Albo and Jimbo are pushing the whole country towards them.

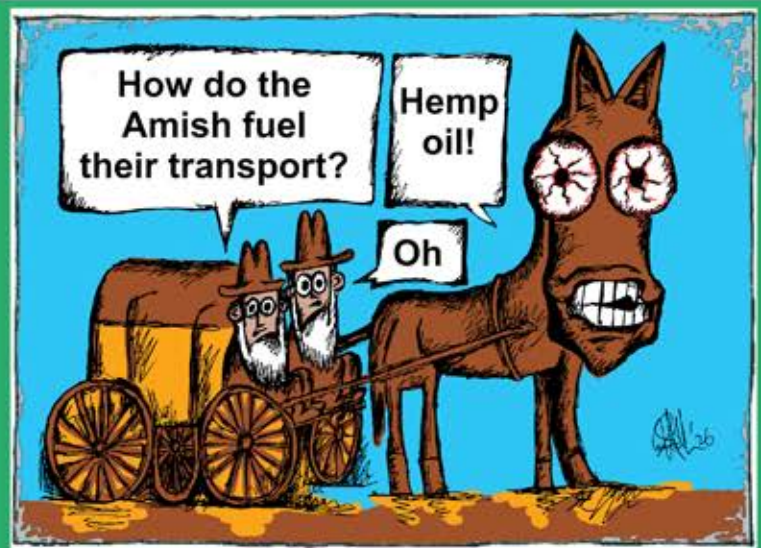
Neil Jabs

Well not according to the VOTERS in the last election. One Nation romped in and have some of you missed the latest polls with One Nation way ahead yet again? Some of you must be delusional, blind and typically ignorant of the true facts regardless what your own agenda is. Bring it on - time for change and now is the time.

ARE THE AMISH ONTO SOMETHING HERE?

Laurie Philipsen

Lots of questions to be answered



From the Holster



Shaun Hollis brings you a lighter look at local news.

but attended a conference a few years back where the Margaret River Hemp Co did a detailed presentation on the crop and its uses, particularly in the building industry. The biggest challenge is in the processing - its hard on equipment. Worth investigating IMO, cheers.

Alf Craig

Just because it hasn't been done on a commercial scale doesn't mean it can't be done. But this thing about the Amish appears to be an urban myth... Googled it- "Industrial hemp is a highly viable, renewable resource. While there is anecdotal lore that some self-reliant communities, including the Amish, utilise cold-pressed hemp oil for biodiesel, commercial hemp fuel production

is still heavily experimental and rarely used for mainstream daily operations."

Jeff Read

Will coffee grow up here?

Errol May

All sounds very exciting indeed, hopefully there will be a product that can fill the farmers' vacant land profitability which will benefit the Douglas Shire community.

Peter Kirchmann

Maybe ask an existing grower... think it's too wet to be commercially viable.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Send your letters and comments to editor@newsport.com.au or post comments on our Facebook and Instagram pages.

OPEN HOMES



OPEN HOME

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Thursday, June 18
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SOCIALS

A host of sporting fixtures have taken place across Douglas Shire in the past fortnight, including AFL Cairns and Ironman Cairns. Pictures: Santiago Gonzalez



Tyana and Robbie Douglas at the AFL Crocs versus Lions game.



Andrew Simpson and Belinda Takwell at the AFL Crocs versus Lions game.



Mary Smith and Jane Stevenson at the Ironman Cairns event in Craiglie.



Molly Salter and Karen Vernon at the AFL game.



Rebecca and Craig Milloy at the Ironman Cairns event in Craiglie.



Elizabeth Guy and Nicole Gruber at the Ironman Cairns event in Craiglie.

WHAT'S ON

JUN 19 **Beansies and Brownies for Brain Cancer Research**
Time: 6am-9am
Location: Under the raintrees at Mossman

JUN 19 **Playgroup**
Time: 9am-12pm
Location: Mossman Support Services, 22 Mill Street Mossman

JUN 19 **Friday Night Nine and Dine**
Time: 5pm-8pm
Location: Daddyshack Indoor Golf and Hardy's BBQ, Grant St.

JUN 19 **Tango & Latin Social Dancing**
Time: 6.30pm-9.30pm
Location: Pullman Sea Temple

JUN 19 **Phoebe and Zane**
Time: 5.30pm-8.30pm
Location: Ellis Beach Bar & Grill

JUN 19 **Bingo Night With K-Star**
Time: 6.30pm-8pm
Location: 3Sixteen Bar & Bistro at Ramada Resort, Port Douglas

JUN 19 **NYX Festival 2026**
Time: 12pm
Location: Glen Gordan Station, Ravenshoe, QLD

JUN 19 **Sound Healing**
Time: 7pm-8pm
Location: Port Douglas Yoga Studio

JUN 19 **Yahdoh**
Time: 7.30pm-10.30pm
Location: Club Mossman

JUN 20 **Food Gardening at Circle of Plenty**
Time: 8am-10am
Location: Circle of Plenty, Mossman Botanic Garden

JUN 20 **Ben Lee - On Tour Always**
Time: 6pm
Location: Ellis Beach Bar & Grill

JUN 20 **Country Fair**
Time: 2pm-9pm
Location: Mossman State School

JUN 21 **Nicole Nighthawk**
Time: 1pm-4pm
Location: Ellis Beach Bar & Grill

JUN 21 **International Yoga Day**
Time: 9.30am-2pm
Location: Port Douglas Yoga Shala, Above The Book Lounge, Warner Street, Port Douglas

JUN 21 **Ben LEE - live music**
Time: 4pm
Location: Port Douglas Yacht Club

JUN 22 **Hole In One Jackpot Competition**
Time: 10am-6pm
Location: Daddyshack Indoor Golf, Grant St, Port Douglas

JUN 23 **NYX Festival 2026**
Time: 12pm
Location: Glen Gordan Station, Ravenshoe, QLD

JUN 23 **Indonesian Night**
Time: 5pm-8pm
Location: 3Sixteen Bar & Bistro at Ramada Resort, Port Douglas

JUN 24 **Marina Markets**
Time: 11am-5pm
Location: Crystalbrooke Marina, Port Douglas

JUN 24 **Four Mile GAA's First Birthday Showcase!**
Time: 5.30pm
Location: The Croc Pit, Port Douglas

JUN 25 **Paranormal Romance Author Talk**
Time: 6pm-8pm
Location: Mossman Library

JUN 25 **Trivia - Topics In The Tropics**
Time: 6.30pm-8pm
Location: Hemingway's Brewery, Crystalbrook Marina, 44 Wharf St

JUN 25 **Trivia Night**
Time: 6.30pm-8pm
Location: 3Sixteen Bar & Bistro at Ramada Resort, Port Douglas

JUN 25 **Bingo with K-Star**
Time: 7pm-8.30pm
Location: Club Mossman

JUN 26 **Friday Night Nine and Dine**
Time: 5pm-8pm
Location: Daddyshack Indoor Golf and Hardy's BBQ, Grant St, Port Douglas

JUN 26 **Thomas Lowth**
Time: 5.30pm-8.30pm
Location: Ellis Beach Bar & Grill

JUN 26 **Bingo Night With K-Star**
Time: 6.30pm-8pm
Location: 3Sixteen Bar & Bistro at Ramada Resort, Port Douglas

JUN 26 **Rockin' Rick Karaoke**
Time: 7.30pm-10.30pm
Location: Club Mossman

JUN 27 **Phoebe and Zane**
Time: 5.30pm-8.30pm
Location: Ellis Beach Bar & Grill

JUN 28 **Boing Boing And Drunk Mum - Live Music**
Time: 3pm-7pm
Location: The Yachty - Port Douglas Yacht Club - 1 Spinnaker Cl

Visit www.newsport.com.au to list your event for free

SPORTS DIGEST

Iron will brings thousands to finish line

Nick Thompson and Penny Slater both won their first ironman races at the Ironman Cairns on Sunday.

In a race where the cyclists ride up the Captain Cook Highway to Craiglie twice, Thompson, of Western Australia, took the win in 7:49:48, more than seven minutes clear of Canberra's Ben Hill, with Japan's Jumpei Furuya third.

"The win means everything," Thompson said after the race.

"First ironman win being in Australia, in front of the Cairns crowd, which showed me so much support last year and again this year.

"When you race overseas, you don't really get that and it makes such a huge difference."

Thompson, 26, was the favourite heading into the race after narrowly missing out on victory last year. Furuya was first out of the water after the 3.8km swim at

Palm Cove, with Thompson a minute behind, but he soon took the lead and did not look back.

Slater crossed the line in 8:59:27, more than eight minutes ahead of Skye Wallace with New Zealand's Rebecca Clarke third.

"I'm pretty tired, but I don't think the adrenaline's worn off yet so I'm just so excited, I mean, I feel like this win's been a long time coming," Slater said.

"I've had a lot of podiums, a lot of fourth places, so it means so much to win here in Cairns."

Clarke exited the water almost three minutes clear of three-time race winner Regan Hollioake, with Slater seven minutes behind.

Hollioake led the 180km bike course, but she tore a hamstring in the run and was forced to retire.

The 15th Ironman Cairns included more than 3000 athletes.

BRIEFS

SOCCER

Douglas United beat Stratford 3-1 at home on Friday, June 5.

Georges Lauhe scored two goals. All the scoring was done early, with the score 3-1 at half time. The Dragons had a bye last weekend, and play Mareeba at home this Friday at 8.30pm.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Mossman Sharks went down to Mareeba at Mareeba on Saturday, losing 18-46.

Japheth Mundraby, Kieshon Hunter-Flanders and Robert Amber all scored tries, while Hunter-Flanders and Cameron Hooker kicked conversions. The week before they lost to Cairns Brothers 24-54, with Latrell Heard running in two tries and Cameron Hooker making three conversions. The women lost to Southern Suburbs 12-30 on the weekend, with Keasharn Sands-Hart running in two tries and Sheryl Missionary one. This week the Sharks are away to Innisfail on Saturday, with the women playing at 4.30pm and the men 6pm.

SHOT OF THE DAY!



Reef Raider Angus Welsh feels the weight of some heavy opposition against Southside Crusaders during a hard-fought 33-27 home victory on Saturday. Ryan Connors, Jarvis Kessler and Quinton Dartiguelongue all scored tries, while inspirational captain Luke Edwards kicked seven penalties and conversions. Picture: Shaun Hollis



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IRON-WILLED WARRIORS



Ironman Cairns competitor Santiago Beltran Diaz passing through Craiglie during the cycle leg on Sunday. Full story, Page 19. Picture: Santiago Gonzalez



The Laura racing weekend is big on Cape York. Picture: Laura turf club

They're off and racing to Laura for top fun

Remote country racing fans are in for a treat later this month with the four-day Laura Races and Rodeo carnival taking place.

Run by the Laura Amateur Turf Club, the unique event is a celebration of Outback culture, which includes a variety of horse sports, thoroughbred racing, a rodeo and bands at the Cape York town of Laura from Thursday, June 27, to Sunday, June 28.

Visitors can camp at the venue from 8am on the Thursday, with bands Slippery, Careless and The Barnyard Band playing across the four nights.

Thursday night includes a family event, Friday includes horse sports, the main horse racing takes part on the Saturday, and the rodeo happens on Sunday.

"Who's getting excited?" race organisers say.

"Who's ready? Giddy up."

Big AFL name game

Former champion AFL player Dylan Shiel is set to become the second big name to play for the Port Douglas Crocs this year after Dustin Martin's one-off appearance early last month.

Shiel, who played more than 200 games with GWS Giants and Essendon from 2012-25, and was an all-Australian in 2017, will don the blue and white on Saturday, June 27, against the South Cairns

Cutters. On Saturday, the men's team continued on it's winning ways with a 14.14 (98) to 8.11 (59) away win against Trinity Bulldogs, while the women went down to the Bulldogs 2-1 (13) to 11.9 (75).

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