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SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

FREE GUIDE
AUTUMN 2018



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Autumn

2018

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EST 2017

GREEN LANE

BOWRAL



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Green Lane is a leafy shopping and dining precinct nestled between Bowral's famous Dirty Janes and The Acre.

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The Orangery filled with an amazing selection of indoor plants, art and antiques;
The Potting Shed with its quirky array of vintage pots, gates, benches and topiary;
The Grove on Green Lane for delicious takeaway brunch, lunch, wine and coffee in our citrus grove;
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It's an oasis of green, a friendly meeting place for visitors and locals ... and a bustling hub filled with laughter, music and creativity. We love it, and we hope you will too!

Maureen and Chris Gardner

For more information, phone *Harry's on Green Lane* - 02 4862 2983
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Escape

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

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COVER IMAGE

Elise Hassey
Shot at Hillview, Sculpture Biennial exhibition

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Bendooley Estate

Editor's welcome

The Highlands has presumably changed remarkably since Leo Berkelouw came here more than 40 years ago. In this autumn issue, the patriarch of the famous book dynasty tells Escape Southern Highlands that people were agog when he moved the headquarters of the family business from Sydney, but Leo could see the writing on the wall. Rare and antique booksellers in London were leaving behind exorbitant city rents and heading for the country over in the UK. 'I knew it was the way we should take our business here,' he says.

It was this innovation and eye to the future that has helped Bendooley Estate, the Highlands home of the Berkelouw family, become the success story it is today. It also remains all about location, location, location as Paul Berkelouw (Leo's eldest son and director of the family's Highlands affairs) reminded me recently while showing off Bendooley's schmick new European inspired cottage accommodation. Perfectly situated between Sydney and Canberra Bendooley is leading the way in positioning the Highlands as a tourist destination, and proving the famous adage, 'Build it and they will come'.

Of course, there are many other enterprising businesspeople, and inspired artisans putting the Southern Highlands on the map. Such as acclaimed curator Axel Arnott and award winning local sculptor, and co-curator David Ball, who are working with a dedicated team to attract 25,000 art lovers to the

area for the month long Hillview Sculpture Biennial exhibition from April 28 to May 27. And beyond then, more will come with the opening of the permanent sculpture park at Hillview from May 27. Others with their eyes firmly on the larger picture for the Highlands include two hatted chef James Viles at Biota Dining (see page 57), and Ben Twomey and Cameron James at Southern Highlands Brewing Company and their new Kitchen and Taphouse (see page 48). Then there's Jane Crowley (page 105) whose vintage and antique treasure trove Dirty Janes Bowral goes from strength to strength. Or Highlands Merchant owner Lisa Wisken, who ignored doubters when they said her cafe in Moss Vale's Argyle Street would never work. Try getting a park outside Highlands Merchant (see page 112) today!

To all those working to bring something new to the Highlands, whether in agri-tourism, foodie feasts and festivals, or outdoor, cultural or retail experiences, we applaud you. For your vision, your energy and your long-term commitment to our community because bottom line, more visitors to the Southern Highlands means more jobs for locals, and hopefully more choice for our kids as they grow and enter the workforce. Food for thought.

We hope you find lots to sink your teeth into this autumn. Enjoy your Escape Southern Highlands. ■

Alex

THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS map



OUR TOWNS AND VILLAGES

THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS IS MADE UP OF MANY TOWNS AND VILLAGES, EACH WITH ITS OWN UNIQUE CHARACTER, CHARM AND ATTRACTIONS. HERE'S A CHEAT SHEET SO YOU CAN GET ACQUAINTED WITH JUST SOME OF THEM. TO DISCOVER MORE, AND FOR MORE DETAIL, MAPS AND OTHER ESSENTIAL INFORMATION, VISIT [DESTINATION SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS \(SOUTHERN-HIGHLANDS.COM.AU\)](https://destination.southernhighlands.com.au).

MITTAGONG

Historic Mittagong, the site of one of the first iron ore discoveries in Australia, has plenty to offer. From parks (try Lake Alexandra) to walks (the nearby Box Vale track with its incredible views of Nattai Gorge) to wineries (including Howards Lane Vineyard, Artemis Vineyard and Winery, and Tractorless Vineyard Cellar Door @ McVitty Grove). There's also the treasure trove that is the Mittagong Antiques Centre, and fabulous craft and design centre Sturt with its shop, cafe and wood school. Stop off at Destination Southern Highlands Welcome Centre on the way into Mittagong and get informed about what's on locally.

MOSS VALE

Centred around the Victorian era railway station in Argyle Street, Moss Vale is known for being a down to earth country town. The annual agricultural show is one of the biggest in the area, and recently the main street has undergone a revival with the opening of many independent artisan and homewares shops. Fantastic cafes and eateries such as Bernie's Diner, The Vale, Highlands Merchant and Il Pranzo offer delicious eating choices, with newcomers Southern Highlands Brewing Kitchen & Taphouse, Birch and the Wine Mosaic Lounge bringing some well received glamour to old favourites such as Seafood Affair, and Briars Country Lodge and Historic Inn just up the road.

BOWRAL

Watched over by Mount Gibraltar, Bowral is the largest town in the Highlands. Full of historic public and private buildings, stunning country gardens and grand estates, this thriving country township is known for its vintage, interiors, antiques and homewares stores and precincts such as Dirty Janes and Green Lane, as well as markets, galleries, bookshops, nurseries and boutiques. Its dining scene has become all the richer recently with the opening of The Mill, Grand Bistro and Bistro Officina, which complement winning stalwarts such as Biota Dining, Onesta Cucina, Cafe Rosso, Eccetera Trattoria Pizzeria, The Royal, and a raft of other local favourite restaurants, cafes and pubs. Visitors and locals are drawn to famous landmarks such as the Bradman Museum and International Cricket Hall of Fame, as well as the many festivals and events that include Tulip Time, the Bowral Classic and the Bong Bong Picnic Races. And of course there is a plethora of award winning vineyards nearby, such as Centennial Vineyards, to visit as well.

BURRAWANG

Quaint and historical, Burrawang boasts old world charm, country hospitality and one of the best NAPLAN achieving primary schools in New South Wales. The newly renovated Burrawang Village Hotel, with its huge grassy lawns overlooking rolling hills, is a popular accommodation and dining spot. As is the award winning Burrawang General Store Cafe across the road, with its great food served all day long and restored self contained accommodation. The 1883 School of Arts building in the main Hoddle Street plays host to the village's annual ball and the not to be missed Easter markets, which are a highlight of the Highlands market calendar and attract more than 10,000 visitors.

EXETER

The historic Exeter Village Hall and adjoining park and oval lie at the heart of picturesque Exeter, a village of leafy streets and grand rows of trees. Local icon the Exeter General Store performs its role as bookshop, post office, gourmet cafe and food store admirably. If browsing is on the cards, you'll find The Village Pump Antiques is worth a look. The Exeter village markets are held on the first Saturday of each month in the grounds of the village oval.

BERRIMA

This pretty 1830s village has history (the heritage Old Berrima Gaol, iconic Berrima Courthouse and National Trust listed Harper's Mansion); nature (the Wingecarribee River runs through it); fantastic food (Eschalot, Josh's Cafe and Feast at Berrima, plus excellent patisseries, cafes, local makers and artisans) as well as Australia's oldest continuously licensed inn, the Surveyor General. The Berrima Schoolyard Market is held on the fourth Sunday of every month from February to November in the grounds of the local primary school.

SUTTON FOREST

It might be small but Sutton Forest has stuff going on with Montrose Berry Farm, where you can pick your own berries in summer, The Everything Store, which lives up to its name, and the stunning Red Cow Farm gardens with its recently opened seasonal garden shop, definitely worth a visit or two.

HILL TOP

This northern village has a rich history as a former railway town and is now gateway to Australia's largest rail museum, Trainworks at Thirlmere. Don't miss the exhilarating Cave Creek walking track too.

FITZROY FALLS

The tiny village of Fitzroy Falls, surrounded by farmland and wilderness, takes its name from the 81 metre waterfall in adjoining Morton National Park. The nearby Belmore Falls are equally spectacular. Head to the Fitzroy Falls picnic area for great views of the falls and for bird watching opportunities – you'll experience the sounds of lyrebirds if you're lucky. The deck at the Falls Cafe is a great spot for refreshments.

JOADJA

An area of farms and bushland on the periphery of the Southern Highlands, Joadja is steeped in history, once being home to more than 1000 Scottish immigrants who mined shale oil in the late 1800s. The success of Joadja Estate winery, and more recently Joadja Distillery, and its association with food and experience festival WILDfest Southern Highlands, has firmly put Joadja on the map.


CANYONLEIGH

Made up of large rural properties, Canyonleigh lies at an altitude of 700 metres and is fast gaining a reputation as a wine producing area of the Highlands. Situated on the drier western edge of the region, it is a great place to spot native wildlife.

ROBERTSON

The small, character filled town of Robertson combines a rolling pastoral setting (did you know most of the movie Babe was filmed there?) with fabulous locally grown produce such as potatoes, truffles, pears, paddock raised eggs and award winning Pecora Dairy ewe's milk cheese. The Robertson Inn is a great place for a family meal, and the stylishly revamped Robertson Hotel is a luxurious launch pad for a night, weekend or week in the Highlands. The iconic Robertson Pie Shop has a huge range of sweet and savoury pies and is open all year round, and Crop Swap every Saturday morning at the Bowling Club is a great place to mingle with the local Robbo green finger gardeners.

BUNDANOON

Packed with old world charm, Bundanoon is a vibrant town with cafes, tearooms, antique dealers and health retreats. Market days are held on the first and third Sundays, and bushwalking and mountain biking enthusiasts are drawn to the nearby Morton National Park. Brigadoon, the southern hemisphere's largest gathering of Scottish diaspora, complete with bagpipes, kilts, marching bands and highland games, is held every April and features all things tartan. 



LOCAL MOVERS AND SHAKERS

THE HIGHLANDS IS HOME TO AN ECLECTIC COMMUNITY OF **FAMILY BUSINESSES, ARTISANS, MAKERS, PRODUCERS, FARMERS, AND PURVEYORS OF FOOD, WINE AND SPIRITS.** WITH AUTUMN ON THE WIND, TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT SOME OF OUR TALENTED HIGHLANDERS ARE UP TO AS THE LEAVES START TO FALL.



Moss Vale eateries expand

With Moss Vale continuing to attract high end independent retailers, others have followed the lead of Southern Highlands Brewing Kitchen & Taphouse, which has seemingly nailed the formula for drinking and dining success (read our review on page 48). Now locals Renee and Glenn Wallace have moved into the market with the opening of their eatery, Birch, located in the old post office building in Argyle Street. Head chef Lachlan Houghton (Vue du Monde, Three Blue Ducks, Eschalot) and partner and pastry chef Lucy Matheson are offering a seasonal and innovative Australian menu that's earning keen reviews from patrons. Think creative dishes like sweet corn risotto with finger lime, fried silk, black garlic and river mint. With a background in design, owner Renee says Birch's philosophy is to 'deliver a unique dining experience

without pretentiousness or expectation' (birchrestaurant.com.au). Meanwhile, down the road, local favourite Polly's Pies & Pastries is getting ready for a hop, skip and jump move across Argyle Street to its first new home in 28 years, with work completed by Paul Maloney of Oxley Building Company. The Pollock family, owners of the award winning pie shop and bakery, are hoping to be in their new shop for Easter. Hot cross buns anyone? And while you're in Mossie, pop in and see Sarah and her fabulous team at Il Pranzo cafe. Always full, always fabulous, Escape is loving Il Pranzo's panelled wood refurb.



Birch.
Images Anisa Sabet



CONGRATS

TO **DESTINATION SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS** WHICH PICKED UP A **SILVER GONG IN THE 2017 QANTAS AUSTRALIAN TOURISM AWARDS** LAST MONTH. ITS WINTER PIE TIME CAMPAIGN SAW 53 HIGHLANDS PIE VENUES MAKE 100,000 PIES BRINGING THOUSANDS OF VISITORS TO THE HIGHLANDS AND INJECTING MORE THAN \$1 MILLION INTO OUR LOCAL ECONOMY.

Hillview heights

When acclaimed curator and Exeter local Axel Arnott agreed to come on board for the Hillview Sculpture Biennial, Damien Miller knew things were on the move. 'What started as a small regional sculpture show five years ago, now has the potential to become a national drawcard for the Southern Highlands,' said Miller, lessee of the historic former summer house of NSW governors. The 60 hectare property with its sweeping 360 degree views out to Exeter, Sutton Forest, Golden Vale and Werai lends itself to displaying interactive and site specific sculpture on a grand scale. And this year's exhibition, with more than 100 outdoor and indoor works, will not disappoint.

Co-curator and local sculptor David Ball, winner of last year's Sculpture by the Sea, is one of the exhibiting artists. Other acclaimed locals participating include Lucinda McDonald, Britta Stenmanns, Heidi McGeoch, Sam Larwill, Sam Stephenson and Philip Walker. They will be joined by Peter Lundberg (that's his remarkable work on our cover), Marcus Tatton, Margarita Sampson, Elyssa Sykes-Smith, Angus Adameitis, Michael Purdy and esteemed sculptor Ron Robertson-Swann OAM, head of sculpture at the National Art School and artistic advisor (and frequent exhibitor) to Sculpture by the Sea. Event organisers expect more than 25,000 to attend. Read more about some of the brilliant sculptors set to bring Hillview to life on page 93.

Bonfire opening celebration, April 28, 5pm-10pm, adults \$15, kids & students free. Exhibition, April 28-May 27, 9am-5pm daily.
hillviewsculpture.com



IMAGE ELISE HASSEY



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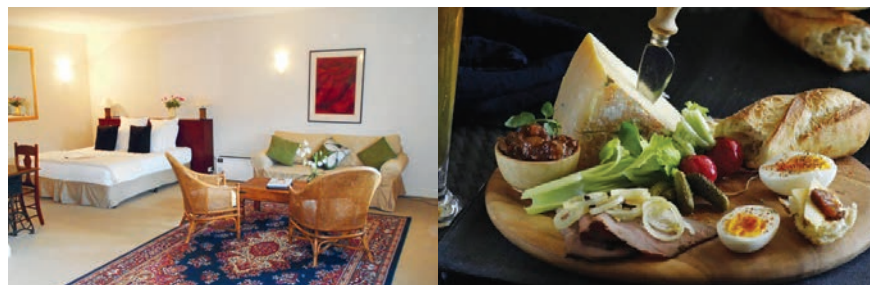
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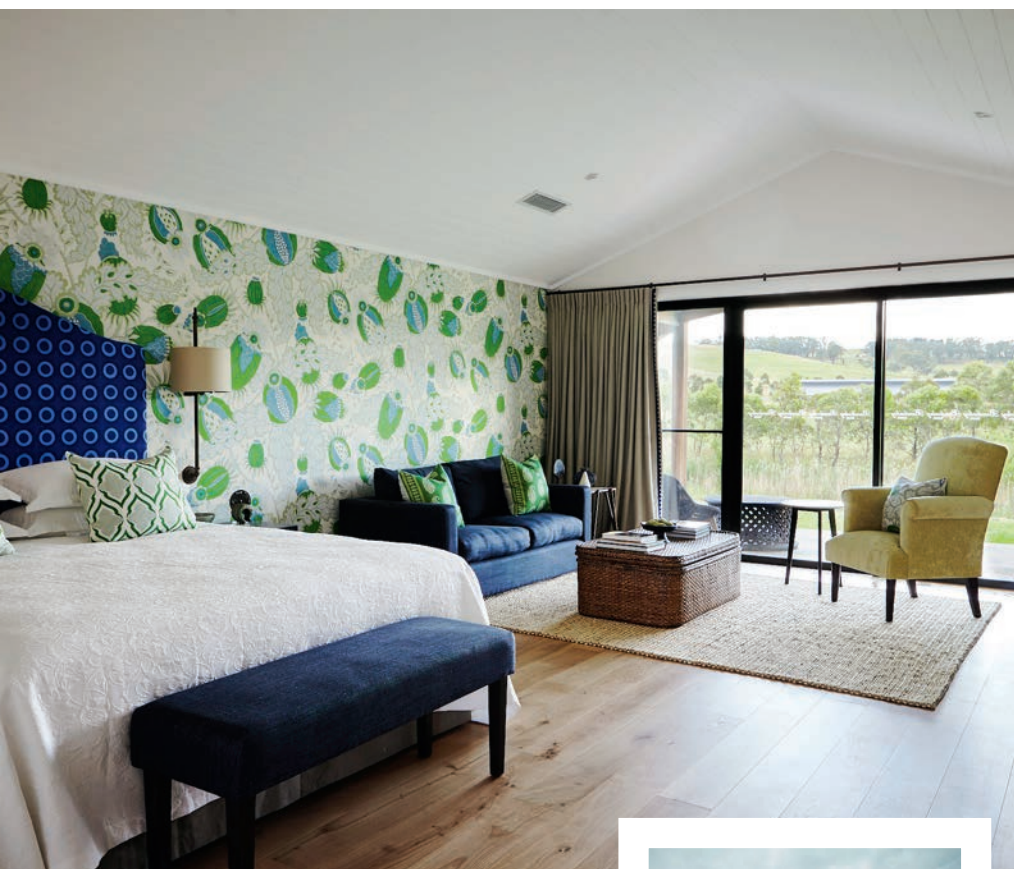
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New chapter

The Berkelouw family has long been at the forefront of showcasing the Highlands. Ever since patriarch Leo moved headquarters of the family's famous book business from King Street, Sydney, to 'a paddock near Berrima' (read our profile of Leo on page 138), Bendooley Estate has set the bar high in terms of books, food, wine and weddings. The family joined the accommodation game with the recent opening of The Book Barn Cottage (the original Bendooley gatekeeper's cottage), and now the completion of six luxury cottages last month. The one, two and three bedroom cottages are named after famous Australian authors, and have views over the 200 acre property. They were designed by architect Grant McConnell, who also helped conceptualise Berkelouw's Oxford Street flagship bookshop, and worked with Mittagong builder Tim Davis Rice to build Bendooley's Book Barn. Sumptuous affairs, the cottages are clad in Australian hardwoods with bespoke wallpapers and interiors, including framed prints taken from the page plates of vintage tomes. Interiors are by local designer Jennifer Gill. All stays include a country style continental breakfast, a bottle of Bendooley Estate sparkling wine, tea and coffee. And it's a quick mosey up to Bendooley's restaurant, book barn, boutique vineyard and cellar door. Perfect for a Highlands weekend or mid-week break, a wedding, a work jolly or just a luxury local staycation away from the kids. Sure to be a bestseller.

bendooleyestate.com.au



Home away from home

We love Dirty Janes. The vast vintage and antique market, with its more than 75 dealers selling jewellery, furniture, art, lighting, clothing and more, brings out the magic in shopping. Now more than 200 retailers, decorators, stylists and buyers from out of town will descend on the famed Highlands landmark at the invitation of owners Athol Grouch and Jane Crowley for their four day At Home event. Exhibitors will include Sibella Court from The Society Inc, The Inspired Paddock and The Fingerprint Tree, as well as the Crowley & Grouch brand, which sources the best of vintage from Europe, the UK and North America. Says Crowley (our Ask a Local on page 105), 'Last year was our inaugural year and people came from as far afield as Mildura and Yamba. Our aim is to promote the Southern Highlands as a destination viable for retailers to visit, and purchase from quality businesses who cater to the wholesale homewares and decorating industry.' A cause close to Escape's heart. And while you're there, skip across to The Orangery and Harry's On Green Lane and the fabulous Suzie Anderson Home, Bowral, which has had a recent 'casual conservatory' makeover. Full of essentials for garden and outdoor living, Suzie A's (also in Moss Vale) will always inspire and entice.

**At Home, May 12-15, Dirty Janes Bowral,
13 Banyette Street; dirtyjanes.com
Suzie Anderson Home, via Green Lane,
13-15 Banyette Street, Bowral; suzieandersonhome.com**





Prized painter

If you love art, you may already be aware of the delicate, beautiful still life and portraits by Vanessa Stockard, who works from a studio in the front garden of the Bowral home she shares with husband Will Wolfenden and almost two-year-old daughter Isobel, aka 'the Egg'. Stockard's work 'Self-portrait as new mum' in acrylic on wood panel was a finalist in last year's Archibald Prize, and now the College of Fine Arts (COFA) graduate, who has work showing in China, New York and Miami this year, is celebrating another first. An artist residency at Chateau d'Orquevaux in Champagne-Ardenne, France, later in the year. 'Submerging yourself in a new environment is invigorating and encourages new ideas and experiences that ultimately end up in artworks with a renewed sense of wonder,' says Stockard. [@vanessastockard](#)



TOI TOI BCO

You may not recognise him out of his tuxedo and tails, but local Brian Castles-Onion is quite something in the music world. Castle-Onions, who last year was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia for his service to performing arts, is currently gearing up for this year's Handa Opera production of La Boheme on Sydney Harbour from March 23. The long time conductor with Opera Australia says for those who haven't experienced this event, it's well worth the effort: 'Opera is not an elitist art-form, opera is for everyone. If you love stupendous costumes and sets, world class singing and a fabulous atmosphere that includes foot stomping and cheering, you'll have an absolute ball. This is a night you'll remember.' But if Sydney is a step too far, we have local opera choices too. Check out our Festivals and Feasts feature (page 54) and read about The Celtic Tenors appearing at The Loch, Berrima, during their Australian 'Irish Songbook Tour' on April 15 or don't miss a plethora of music this season including Bowral Autumn Music Festival (see our story page 102) La la la la la. [opera.org.au](#); [theloch.net.au](#)



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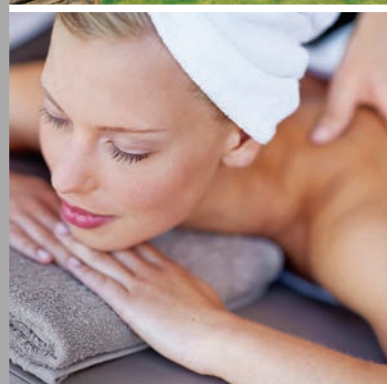
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WHAT'S ON AUTUMN

WE'VE CHERRY PICKED AUTUMN HIGHLIGHTS TO LOOK OUT FOR IN THE NEXT COUPLE OF MONTHS. YOU'LL ALSO FIND MANY OTHERS THROUGHOUT THIS ISSUE, BUT WITH SO MUCH HAPPENING BE SURE TO LOOK OUT FOR UPDATES @ESCAPESOUTHERNHIGHLANDS AND CHECK OUT SOUTHERN-HIGHLANDS.COM.AU/EVENTS/WHATSON



BUSKERS BATTLE

Moss Vale will back up a big show weekend with the two day Buskers Battle on March 17 & 18. Singers, bands, crooners, instrument players and undiscovered wannabes will descend on the main street to sing/play/warble their hearts out. With the chance to share in \$7000 prize money, the 12 pre-selected finalists will line the streets to get votes from locals and shoppers on Saturday before the finalists battle it out the following day in Leighton Gardens. To be judged by Aria award winner Margaret Ulrich and Mark Callaghan from GANGgajang, this celebration of the vocal chords (and people brass necking it) is organised by the forward thinking Moss Vale & Rural Chamber of Commerce and is all about bringing community together and showcasing local talent. So, bring a pocketful of gold coins, a picnic and an open mind, and be part of this fun family weekend. And if you're hoping for your 15 minutes of fame, get registered at mossvale.org.au/moss-vale-buskers-battle or email coordinator@mossvalechamber.org.au



Retford Park rendezvous

Since the National Trust took over the running of the late James Fairfax's \$120 million Retford Park, manager Scott Pollock has worked closely with local community groups and individuals to produce a unique program of cultural events to showcase the magnificent home, parkland gardens and art collection. From March the glorious gardens (see more on page 76) will be open on the first weekend of each month and John Mulholland, who managed Retford Park for 30 years, will conduct guided tours featuring the property's valuable art collection, concluding champers and canapes. On March 17, Retford Park will welcome music lovers for Music in the Pool House, an afternoon of listening to the Retford Park String Quartet playing in the spectacular Guilford Bell pool pavilion. The modernist building features glass walls that slide away and open to a swimming pool on one side and an ornamental pond on the other. Think LA glamour in a treey Highlands setting. Bean bag, picnic table and chairs provided. BYO picnic and drinkies. On Easter Sunday as part of the Open Garden Weekend, there will be Easter egg hunts in the gardens, and on April 21 a progressive dinner will be held between Retford Park and fellow National Trust property, Harpers Mansion in Berrima. Retford's autumn calendar will finish with a Dogs' Day Out on April 29. Fabulous. nationaltrust.org.au/places/retford-park

Grow Cook Eat Festival

If you're ready for a break from busking, stroll up Railway Parade on Sunday March 18 for some more organic entertainment. The Grow Cook Eat Festival is a hands on celebration of our Highlands produce, and growers. Great free activities for the kids, talks and demonstrations, and lots of produce stalls. See our story on page 54 for more local feasts and festivals happening this autumn. @growcookeatfestival

The Moss Vale Show

Be part of a proud local tradition that celebrates rural and townie life over three days and two nights. See our rural producers showing their best, plus horse events, arts and crafts, sideshow alley, rides, show bags, wood chopping and a pavilion bursting with local entries in all things arts, crafts, growing and cooking. On Sunday this year they're having the classic car, truck and bike Show N Shine, which includes the iconic Holden Monaro's 50th birthday with cash prizes. The ever popular demolition derby has moved to Saturday night, and other highlights include medieval jousting, dog obedience displays, the Show Princess competition, the pet show, teddy bears' picnic, dog high jump, a magic jester, the all new Fluro-Splash and the fireworks. And let's not forget of course the ever popular wife carrying competition for those feeling up for a challenge. Oh honeeey...

March 9-11, Moss Vale Showground, Roberston Road, Moss Vale.

Fri & Sat March 9 & 10 9am-10pm; Sun March 11 9am-4pm.

mossvaleshow.com.au



THE WILLO ENDURO

Started in memory of keen mountain biker James Williamson, a former Chevalier student who died from a previously undiagnosed heart condition in 2010, the annual Willo Enduro sponsored by The Fixed Wheel, Bowral takes place this month. Organisers are expecting more than 500 riders of all ages who will compete in 25km, 50km, or 75 km around a 25km loop in Wingello State Forest. All entry fees go back into local junior mountain bike development. **Sunday March 11, Wingello jameswilliamson.com.au**

Autumn of March music

Whether you love jazz, classical or opera, there's something for every music lover's taste in the Highlands this March. Check out our feature (page 102) for events like the Bowral Autumn Music Festival on March 23-25 with its eight classical concerts in three days. Or the Southern Highlands Symphony Orchestra 2018 Series 1 Concerts on March 17-18 which will pay tribute to prolific Australian composer Colin Brumby, who died in January. bowralautumnmusicfestival.org.au; southernhighlandssymphonyorchestra.com

A photograph of a rustic interior. On the wall is a large white silhouette of a rabbit's head surrounded by a leafy wreath. Below it, on a wooden counter, is a bouquet of yellow and white flowers in a glass vase. To the right, there's a small green plant. The lighting is warm and ambient.

Our unique gift emporium has now expanded into two locations.

Come & visit our new Moss Vale store offering one of the Southern Highland's most exciting shopping experiences, where we stock wonderful and rarely found gifts for all ages.

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MAR

Burrawang Easter Market

Join the thousands that flock to this Easter Saturday beauty that has become one of the biggest market days in the Highlands. You'll find food, furniture, clothes, handmade goods from locals such as artists Mr and Mrs Munro, produce and much more at the 150 stalls that stretch all the way down the village's historic Hoddle Street. All money raised goes to the School of Arts, Burrawang Public school's P&C, and towards a grant that supports local groups and individuals for the next year. Park and ride or stroll to where the action is. If you want to go back to Burrawang (and nearby Robertson) when the crowds have departed, check out our story on page 114.
Saturday March 31, 8am-3pm; burrawangeastermarket.com



Brigadoon

Always bigger than Ben Hur, Brigadoon moves into its 41st year with bands, bagpipes and big burly blokes. If you love Scottish dancing, haggis, shortbread, street parades and all things 'Och aye the noo', head to Bundanoon for what is a fun, noisy and busy family day out.
Saturday April 7, Bundanoon; brigadoon.org.au

Autumn Open Gardens Weekend & Plant Fair

Take the chance to explore some of the Highlands' magnificent rural and town gardens in this annual autumnal event. This year you can see Bellagio (Bowral), Wilderwood (Burradoo), Heidi McGeoch and Sam Larwill's garden (Merrigang Street, Bowral), Robertson Park (Glenquarry) and Prittlewell (Fitzroy Falls). And while you're at it, visit the Plant Fair at the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens site for an array of rare, unusual and hard to find plants, raised locally by the SHBG Plant Growers Group. All money raised goes to SHBG, which is working to develop the Highlands' own botanic gardens.

April 21-22, 9am-4pm, tickets \$35 for all gardens or \$10 single entry. shbg.com.au

APR

WHAT'S ON | Autumn

ANZAC Day

Commemorate the service and sacrifice of our brave armed soldiers, past and present on ANZAC Day. The dawn service at Bowral begins with a march from Cameron's Newsagency on Bong Bong Street at 5.30am to the War Memorial. The 10am march begins from Coles to the War Memorial where the service begins at 10.55am. In Berrima the dawn service begins at 5.45am in front of the War Memorial, Market Place, Berrima and later again at 10.30am. Mittagong RSL will hold a march and dawn service at 5.15am and a main service and march at 10.30am. Moss Vale's service begins with a march from Queen Street at 10.40am to the Moss Vale Services Club. **ANZAC Day, Wednesday, April 25**
rslnsw.org.au; wsc.nsw.gov.au/council/anzac-day for details of other local services



HISTORIC HERITAGE TOUR

April and May are heritage months, thanks to the National Trust's Australian Heritage Festival. Check out Destination Southern Highlands' 45 page Heritage Trail history map packed with historic information concerning every village and town in the region. This clever initiative is all about getting to know the Highlands by stepping back into our colonial past. Use our Q&R code here and download the Trail onto your device. Already in the spirit? Visit National Trust gems Retford Park (see above) or Harper's Mansion in Berrima.

nationaltrust.org.au southernhighlands.com.au



MAY

ANTIQUES & COLLECTABLES FAIR
LOVE GEORGIAN, EDWARDIAN, VICTORIAN OR ANYTHING ANTIQUE? JOIN PROFESSIONAL DEALERS AND COLLECTORS AND FIND A TREASURE.
MAY 5-6, 10AM-4PM, BOWRAL MEMORIAL HALL, BENDOOLEY STREET BOWRAL; 0428 446 534



BDCU dinner at Biota

Once again community banking enterprise BDCUs Children's Foundation is collaborating with Biota Dining to hold its annual fundraiser. The Ode to Autumn dinner funds the continuation of BDCU's local initiatives, including its secondary school mental health forums and the funding of a fulltime youth mental health worker. Well done to the Oxley College community which recently donated \$5000 raised at its Night on the Green event to the BDCU Children's Foundation. **May 1, 7pm Biota Dining, Kangaloon Road, Bowral. Tickets at The Bowral Bookshop 4862 1634**

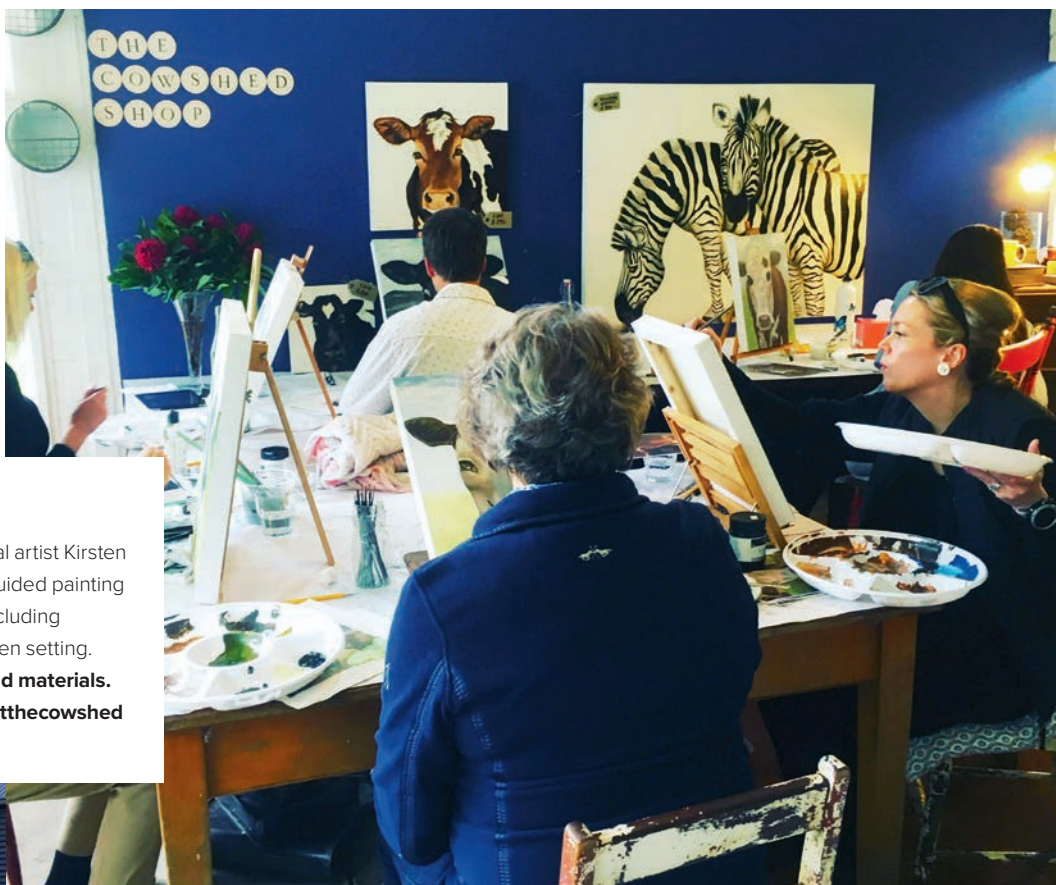
TALKS, TOURS, WORKSHOPS AND CLASSES

ARTFULLY DONE

Take some time for yourself and friends and join local artist Kirsten Deakin and host Maree Reid at these full day, fully guided painting workshops at Art at the Cowshed. Enjoy cooking, including lunch by Maree, and dine outside in a beautiful garden setting.

Sunday April 8 & Sunday May 6, includes lunch and materials.

Nettlebed, 29a Eridge Park Road, Burradoo @artatthecowshed



HEALING HANDS

IF YOU ARE SUFFERING FOLLOWING THE LOSS OF AN INFANT, THIS TWO DAY HEALING RETREAT "MALACHI'S MESSAGE" MAY HELP. BASED ON THE PHILOSOPHIES AND PRACTICES OF LOUISE L. HAY AND DR BRIAN WEISS, FACILITATOR DERAL WEIR SHARES HER JOURNEY FROM GRIEF INTO LOVE, HEALING AND ACCEPTANCE AT THE VALE'S LOVELY PROPERTY AT COLO VALE. KEEP AN EYE OUT TOO FOR THEIR YOGA RETREATS. **MARCH 24-25, THE VALE STUDIO WELLBEING RETREATS DERALGAVEL@GMAIL.COM THEVALESTUDIO.COM**

DUCK WITH WINE

Love MKR and Masterchef? Now you can put your cooking fantasies into practice with Southern Highlands Wines. Learn how to make delicious duck ragout gnocchi and then eat it with wine while listening to winemaker Eddy Rossi talk about food and wine pairings. Bellissimo! **March 16, 6pm-8.30pm, SHW, Illawarra Highway, Sutton Forest. Bookings on 4868 2300**

SLEEP TIGHT BEAUTIFUL

Do you dream of a good night's shut eye but are hindered by asthma, sinus, sleep apnoea, snoring, anxiety, IBS, constipation, diarrhoea, teeth grinding, reflux or TMJ pain? Mim Beim, naturopath of 30 years, is one of the many who believes a course of Buteyko breathing can help. A program of breathing exercises and posture, health and lifestyle guidelines, each lesson is a combination of practical breathing exercises and theory where you learn how this technique works within the body. Mim, author of nine books, teaches the methods to help normalise the breathing pattern, and restore comfortable nasal breathing. Sweet dreams to that! **Courses for adults and children, 4 weeks in Bowral Saturday afternoons or as a webinar Wednesday evenings, see mimbeim.com or call 1800 748 749 for details**

IN THE FAMILY WAY?

Planning on tripping the light fantastic and becoming parents soon? A calm baby comes from a calm birth, they say, so book into a weekend retreat at the Southern Highlands Calmbirth Centre. This birthing education program, trusted by hundreds of expectant parents, teaches things like the mind and body connection in labour and birth, how best to support your birth partner on the big day, and effective ways to keep a positive mind set when all the rules seem to go out the window after the baby actually arrives. Two day Calmbirth courses are held every weekend during March, April and May. **1/19 Lyell Street, Mittagong, 9.30am-6pm, calmbirth.com.au**

UPCYCLE

Got an old piece of furniture that needs some attention? Join Pete Burrows in his two hour classes and learn to upcycle and restore with acrylic and chalk paints. Or take the more intensive class at his Burradoo home, Saint Eloi, and learn more. **Chalk Paint, first Saturday of month 9am-11.30am; Special Finishes, second Saturday of month 9am-11.30am; Intensive at Pete's Workshop, rear 16a Bowral Road, Mittagong, last Saturday of month 9am-1pm.** peteshed@live.com 0417 293 163

GREEN THUMB

When Joanne Dodd moved to her Mittagong home 13 years ago, the backyard was just lawn and a clothesline. Hard to believe when you see the productive oasis she has created growing dozens of types of fruit, veg and edible flowers, which she supplies to leading restaurants Biota and Bistro Officina (see our profile page 64). Join Jo for an open garden event at her Quarter Acre Farm and learn how you can do the same. The Moss Vale Community Garden will be there with a plant stall too. **Sunday April 29, 10am-3pm,** thequarteracrefarm@gmail.com



YES PLEASE TO CHEESE

If you fancy a bit of cheese (like we do) why not learn to go DIY. Lucy Nias, cheesemaker, small farmer and set designer (talented lady) is holding another round of hands on cheesemaking workshops through autumn at Eling Forest Winery. All ingredients to make cheeses like feta, halloumi and camembert are provided, as is tea, coffee and lunch. For more information, check out facebook.com/artisancheesemaking.

March 17, April 14, May 12

STATE OF MIND

Mental health is one of the biggest concerns facing many people, and certainly our youth. Mental health professional Peter Richard-Herbert of Highlands Therapy and Life Coaching is holding a free mental health information evening at his Bowral practice to answer questions such as: What is mental health and mental illness? What therapies are available? How do you know when someone you love needs help? He will also specifically talk about youth mental health in the Highlands and available support services. Worthwhile night out. **March 20 from 6pm** highlandstherapy.com.au 📍



Settle in at the Southern Highlands' newest 60s-inspired wine bar

Choose from thoughtfully sourced wines and craft beers while enjoying a sumptuous grazing plate with friends in our relaxed, friendly lounge. Peruse our extensive wine range in the Argyle Street Wine Merchants and receive expert advice and tips.



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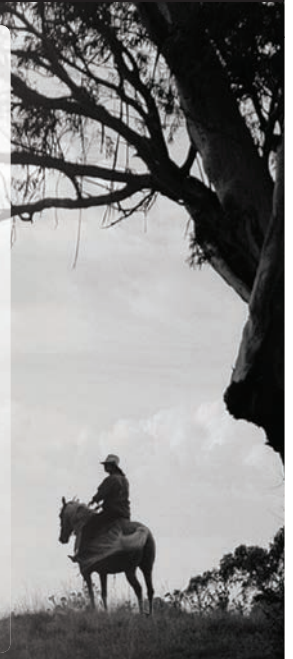
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**marulanartexhibition.com
themarulanartexhibition@gmail.com**



Photo: Ray Joyce

Retford Park

The late, Mr James Oswald Fairfax AC gifted this magnificent property to the National Trust of Australia (NSW) in 2016. These stunning gardens open on the first weekend of each month (the house will also be open on the May weekend). If the 1st of the month falls on a Sunday then it is that weekend that the property will be open. The gardens open from 10am to 4pm. Refreshments available.

See website for events: *The Art and Culture of Retford Park* (sunset tours) - *Music by the Pool* - *Easter Egg Hunt* - *Progressive Dinner* - *A Dog's Day Out*

 **NATIONAL TRUST**
(02) 4861 1933 | e: retfordpark@nationaltrust.com.au
www.nationaltrust.org.au/places/retford-park/



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Our Quest for Life Centre in 9 acres of beautiful grounds in Bundanoon is available for **exclusive hire**. Accommodating 25 guests, Quest for Life can also provide mindfulness, meditation, yoga sessions and delicious food for your next event.

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31st Southern Highlands ANTIQUES & Collectables Fair Supporting Bowral District Hospital

Local, Sydney and country dealers offering a wide selection of furniture, jewellery, silver, porcelain, linen, lamps, books and many other interesting collectables. Refreshments available all weekend. Admission \$10, accompanying children FREE.

**Saturday 5 May 2018, 9am to 5pm
Sunday 6 May 2018, 10am to 4pm**

**Bowral Memorial Hall, Bendooley St, Bowral
T 0428 446 534**

HOTEL REVIEW:

THE BUNDANOON GUEST HOUSE

WORDS ALEX SPEED IMAGES ELISE HASSEY

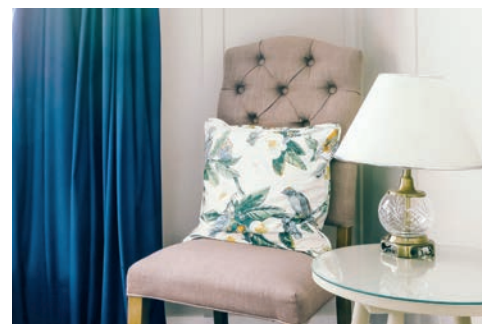
DETAILS

The Bundanoon Guesthouse
101 Railway Avenue, Bundanoon
thebundanoonguesthouse.com.au

Escape checks in for some beguiling charm, contemporary comfort and eclectic eating at this local Bundanoon landmark.

I've heard some locals say there is a mysterious energy about Bundanoon that makes the stars align. Perhaps it's the area's ancient indigenous culture or the untamed vastness and majesty of Morton National Park at its doorstep. Whatever the reason, it's a force that has transformed the lives of Della and Jon Fitzroy.

These relative newcomers to the Highlands made the tree change from Sydney two years ago after buying The Bundanoon Guest House. A bit of a local institution, known for many years as Treetops, it opened in 1910 and is the longest running guest house in town, closing only during the war years. But Jon and Della weren't put off by historical sentiment, or the fact the property needed major structural and cosmetic work. They had a more pressing problem. They had a guest house and dining room but no chef.



'We knew right from the get-go it was very important to retain the character of the place but add a modern twist,' says Della, 'We wanted an excellent dining room that could operate as a separate business but that would fully complement the accommodation side.'

Enter well known local chef Eon Waugh, who has lived in Bundanoon since 1999. Foodies will remember Eon as the owner and head chef of cosy local legend The Studio Restaurant in Exeter, which closed in 2015. Fast forward to 2016 and Eon was busy working in another local favourite, Josh's Cafe in Berrima, but was looking for a kitchen to call his own.

Magic happened when a local businesswoman heard of the Fitzroys plight and Waugh's desires, and made the introductions. Together Della, Jon and the indefatigable Eon, who also enthusiastically took on the role of chief designer, have created a sumptuous and inviting accommodation and dining choice.

Cornices are white, colours are Georgian greys and emerald greens, walls and doors are wood panelled, furnishings are eclectic antique. The look, says Eon, is 'contemporary sophisticated'.

For Della, it was important to replace the former 'twee B&B feel' with 'light and space'. 'We wanted to let it breathe,' says Della, who spent countless hundreds of hours up ladders painting alongside husband Jon, a former electrician who also did all the rewiring.



'When you peel the layers and layers off a building, what's left are the bare bones, and this place has beautiful bones. Now this is a guesthouse people can relax. With friends, with family, or simply sitting with a drink in front of the roaring fire.'

Eon's domain, the dining room, is striking with its polished wood floors and beautifully appointed tables. There is also an impressive private dining room that seats up to 16. Fully licenced and with Eon's eclectic menu, The Dining Room is open for dinner Thursday to Saturday and for lunch on Sunday. Thursday is BYO night, which the locals love.

'I tend to cook what I love to eat,' says Eon. 'So we have a Balinese fish curry, a classic

French cheese souffle or duck confit on the menu. It's about the food, of course, but always about the service too, and the local support we have received has been absolutely extraordinary.'

The Guest House has 14 rooms and a separate two bedroom cottage. All up it can sleep 33 people, and has a big games room with pool table and table tennis, plus a bar that is open every evening for guests. I stay in room 16, an executive spa room. The rooms are large and well finished. There is a king bed with fine linen, complimentary port in a cut crystal decanter and freshly cut roses from the garden. The shower in the newly finished bathroom has the best water pressure I have enjoyed in any hotel, guesthouse or B&B in the Highlands. At night the trains on the track nearby slide by in my dreams, and in the morning the kookaburras and warbling magpies wake me.

Bundanoon Guest House is a place at home in its new skin. It is not trying too hard, but is revelling in its newly revamped beauty, bones and all. It reminds me a bit of a middle aged mama who has recently shaken off her domestic shackles and rediscovered her mojo with new hairdo, new wardrobe, new sass, new panache. You go girl! 🍷

the dining room

@ THE BUNDANOON GUEST HOUSE



The Dining Room with local chef **Eon Waugh** recreates dining of yesteryear with a contemporary seasonal menu showcasing the best of local wines and produce. Fully licenced and recently refurbished, enjoy drinks by the open fire, dine with friends in our stunning new private room or just soak up the ambience of the 100 year old guest house. *Dinner Thurs to Sat from 6pm. Lunch Sun from 12noon.*

the
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Down a long driveway lined by apple trees, Luxstowe House, is nestled between Catavento Sculpture Studio and the paddocks. Rich in history, character and stories, and beautiful antiques and original artworks, Luxstowe House bridges qualities of the past and the present in a rural setting, yet only five minutes away from the pulse of things in the Southern Highlands, Bowral area. Luxstowe House accommodates four people.

Luxstowe House
27 Eridge Park Road, Burradoo
0428 231 110 or 0407 611 349
luxstowehouse.com.au



Formerly the manager's residence for the historic Burrawang General Store, Bower Cottage is a lovingly restored 3 bedroom self contained cottage that sleeps 6 people comfortably. With an open fire, reverse cycle air conditioning and bathroom underfloor heating, a cosy stay is guaranteed. Morning coffee delivered and enjoy breakfast, lunch or afternoon tea at the store.

Bower Cottage
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ACCOMMODATION DIRECTORY

STAYING THE NIGHT AUTUMN 2018

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| Jellore Cottage | 16 Jellore St, Berrima | www.jellorecottage.com.au | 0404 951 884 |
| The Settlers Hut | 16 Jellore St, Berrima | www.jellorecottage.com.au | 0404 951 884 |
| Harper's Cottage | 8 Old Hume Hwy, Berrima | www.jellorecottage.com.au | 0404 951 884 |
| Yallambee | 43 Garland Rd, Bundanoon | www.yallambee.net.au | 02 4883 7787 |
| Bundanoon Country Inn Motel | 2 Anzac Pde, Bundanoon | www.bundanoonmotel.com.au | 02 4883 6068 |
| Berrima Bakehouse Motel | 19 Old Hume Hwy, Berrima | www.berrimamotel.com.au | 02 4877 1381 |

ALL YEAR ROUND

THIS SPECIAL PLACE IS PERFECT FOR AN INTIMATE AUTUMN ESCAPE. OR AT ANY TIME OF YEAR, ACTUALLY.

WORDS **JANE O'CONNELL** IMAGES **ELISE HASSEY**

Ask a dozen people what 'getting away from it all' means and you will probably hear a dozen different answers. But if your dream getaway involves slowing down and connecting with nature, look no further. Robertson Roundhouse is one of those exhale-at-first-sight kind of places. Perhaps it's the building itself, a yurt built with striking western red cedar that evokes the simplicity of an ancient nomadic community. Or it could be the Tibetan prayer flags fluttering in the breeze that transport visitors to another world.

Set down a narrow dirt track off a quiet country lane, the Roundhouse is hidden from the road, surrounded by native and exotic trees. It soon appears around a bend in the track, the earthy red weatherboards contrasting beautifully with the greys and greens of a carefree bush garden.

Owner Jill Taylor points out her favourite features as we meander through the grounds: thriving herbs, lush ferns and towering waratahs alongside mature maple and liquidambar trees. Blue and purple hydrangeas rub shoulders with pink, white and orange lilies, and birds are encouraged to stop by. A portly wood pigeon with feathers like velvet lifts its head as we approach, then resumes its feast at a table covered with seeds. Rosellas and king parrots watch quietly from the branches above, awaiting their turn. Guests are encouraged to feed the birds twice a day from a bucket of seed mix on the verandah, 'tuppence a bag' according to the tag on the handle.

Step inside the yurt to a surprisingly spacious living area (there's room for an upright piano), ideally designed for two with a queen bed behind a partition. A double mattress on the floor of the open loft serves as overflow accommodation. The compact bathroom is tucked away but all else is open plan. The living room has a comfy lounge, dining table and a wall of windows overlooking the garden. In cooler weather, a slow combustion fire takes care of heating and guests will find it stacked with kindling, ready to light. Bags of marshmallows are piled on a nearby table with a long handled skewer and an invitation to get toasting.

A basket maker by trade, Jill explains she has always loved circles, so her attraction



to this unique building makes sense. The yurt has no beginning or ending, she says, 'Just continuous energy. It's spiritual.'


Evidence of her handiwork is all through the home in the hampers of yarn, hand woven hats and rustic baskets in all sizes. Even the drink coasters are crocheted.

But it's nature that takes centre stage here, and Jill has created a space where inside and out flow seamlessly. A small annexe off the kitchen doubles as a reading room and opens onto a timber deck, barbecue and outdoor table. From

there it's just a few steps to the woodshed, the clothesline and a bush track that winds its way down to the road, past a separate creative studio, and circles back to the front verandah.

The yurt has had a number of incarnations, arriving in Robertson in pieces more than 20 years ago from its original home at Hill Top. The numbered sections were reassembled and the yurt rebuilt on the elevated platform where it remains today. Over the years, Jill has also used the property as a studio for meditation, massage and channelling classes.

For those wanting to stretch their legs, it's an easy amble along Hoddle Street to the Cheese Factory, the Robertson Inn (try a refreshing beer from Southern Highlands Brewing Company) and perhaps dinner and a cocktail or two at Pizzas in the Mist.

The walk home certainly warrants a sweet treat for dessert... anyone fancy toasted marshmallows? 

DETAILS

Robertson Roundhouse
Ranelagh Street, Robertson
robertsonroundhouse.com.au

ESCAPE'S AUTUMN SHOPPING FAVOURITES

If you need an excuse to do some shopping this autumn, here's a few reasons we can think of... Easter, Mother's Day, falling of the leaves. But really when do we ever need an excuse? Especially as we've uncovered these local gems to make the job even easier?



Elemental my dear ...

Jess Crook is one of those really clever Highlands people who couldn't find the product she was looking for... so she started her own label. Universal Elements is an organic skincare range Jess, a hairdresser who lives in Moss Vale started in 2016 after suffering skin allergies caused by the nasties in other products. Inspired by the four Greek classical elements (fire, earth, wind and water) get your hands on Jess's beautiful smelling hand and body lotions and potions from Highlands Merchant, Moss Vale. highlandsmerchant.com.au

ESCAPE
LOVES

KUDOS TO FAMILY OWNED GROCERS **HARRIS FARM AT BOWRAL** FOR BEING ONE OF THE FIRST TO RE-INTRODUCE BROWN PAPER SHOPPING BAGS BACK TO THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS. RECYCLABLE, FRIENDLY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, AND RIGHT ON TREND... **GET ON BOARD PEOPLE.**

Whistle up the wind

Online shopping continues to give talented locals the means to create and sell both near and far. Take family concern Fox Whistle. Jacqueline and Frank Loughray design and make beautiful swings, height charts, boot racks, peg rails, serving platters, cheese boards in their backyard workshop in Bowral. Handcrafted in Australian blackbutt, huon pine and recycled woods, they can also personalise pieces by carving names, dates, or favourite sayings onto their handmade pieces. It's touches like these that turn objects like a backyard swing or boot stand into a treasured family keepsake.

foxwhistle.com.au



SWING OUT SISTER

WHAT COULD BE NICER AS THE SEASONS CHANGE THAN CURLING UP WITH A GOOD BOOK ON THIS BEAUTY? CREATED BY MAKER SIMON KENNY (ONE HALF OF THE FABULOUS MOSSY STORE WITH PARTNER GENEVIEVE FURZER) THIS TO-DIE-FOR SWINGING DAY BED IS MADE EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE MOSSY STORE FROM RECYCLED HARDWOOD, SOME FOUND ON THE COUPLE'S PROPERTY NEAR MARULAN. SIMON MADE HIS FIRST PIECE OF FURNITURE AT 14 (A COFFEE TABLE FOR HIS SISTER) AND AFTER A 30 YEAR CAREER IN VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS, RETURNED TO HIS CREATIVE ROOTS LAST YEAR. HE LISTS HIS INFLUENCES AS THE SHAKERS AND DANISH DESIGNERS, PARTICULARLY BERGE MOGENSEN. **MOSSY STORE, 394 ARGYLE STREET, MOSS VALE.**

Drawing on life...

Funny what talents come to the surface when you make that tree change. Ray Carter always loved to draw but it wasn't until he and family moved to Sutton Forest from Sydney he truly felt his creative juices flow. The Fingerprint Tree, which creates hand drawn family trees prints and stamps, was born when his wife asked him to create a memento to celebrate their daughter's first birthday. From that grew an increasing move to drawing pets and cars, which morphed into a fab range of tea towels and stationary, including cards and wrapping paper. Like these splendid bunny ones - just in time for Easter. Find yours in Cameron's Newsagency, Bowral. thefingerprinttree.com.au



EGGCELLENT

Whoever needs an excuse to eat chocolate but if you're looking for one, Easter is the best one we can think of. Lucky then that delectable Bowral chocolatier Ms Peacock is busy cooking up some egg-xeptional (sorry) treats. Try her Hot X Bun Bonbons and chocolate eggs of varying sizes including the tremendous Golden Goose Egg.

The Mill, 210-224 Bong Bong St, Bowral
mspeacock.com.au



Picnic perfection anyone...

Love an outdoor picnic, breakfast in bed, or supper in front of the tele but not keen on getting ants in your antipasto, or spilling your champers? Never fear. Clever local makers Tonia and Michael Krebs of Plank and Trestle have come up with the perfect solution with their mini picnic table to make picnics/breakfast in bed/supper on knees fun again. They've even thought of ways to keep you from spilling a drop with two different designs; one with an ice bucket and the other with inbuilt leather straps to keep that chilled bottle firmly in place. And if you are in the market for a bigger affair, they also make full sized tables too. plankandtrestle.com.au

The new face of Mrs Oldbucks



Continuing the 43 year history of jams and teas at Mrs Oldbuck's, Berrima, is new owner, Carol Brown. Carol is delighted to also be introducing some new culinary ranges – not only from the Southern Highlands, but from many other locations – even as far away as France.



Local product ranges to be found at Mrs. Oldbuck's include Kielty Irish sauces from Robertson, Sutton Forest Olives, Southern Highlands Coffee Roasters Coffee, Brushwood Oats, and more. The new French gold range includes sugars, mustards, peppers and salts and are "must haves" for every table. Carol proudly admits her passions are food, local produce and customer service and she looks forward to your visit.



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superbdesign.com.au



Masuki Store is the new flagship for the locally designed organic baby and kids label, Milk and Masuki. The store also features a carefully curated selection of toys and accessories from Australia and beyond with a focus on high quality design. For a friendly and unique shopping experience, Masuki Store is the new retail destination for kids in the Southern Highlands.

Masuki Store
Shop 8/380 Bong Bong St, Bowral
milkandmasuki.com.au



Twisting Vintage, Mittagong



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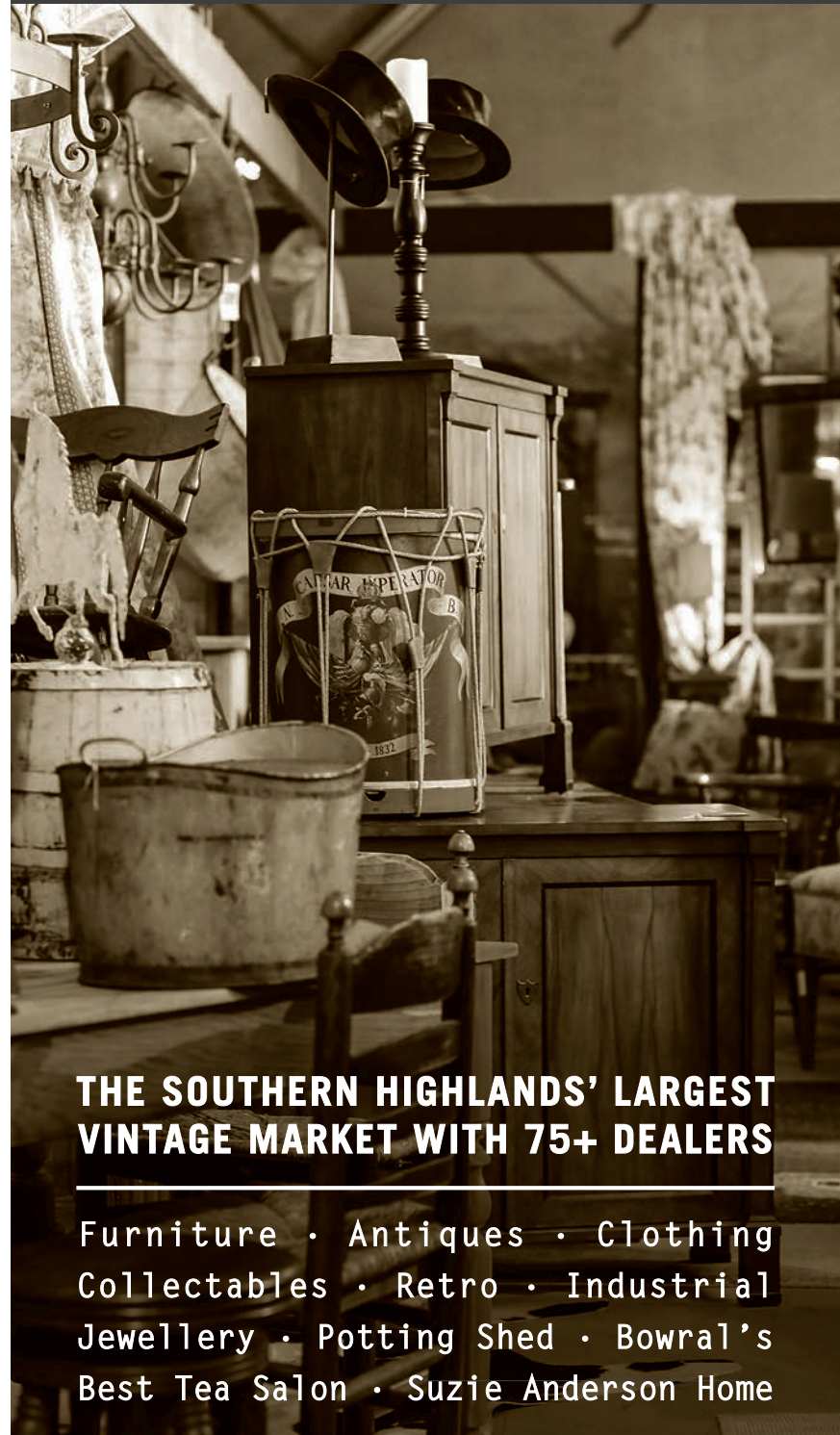


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FLYING HIGH

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Here's the thing. If you live near a major tourist attraction, do you actually ever visit it? Case in point: for many years, every time we've driven past the turnoff to The Illawarra Fly, I've made a mental note to take the kids there. So it was with smug self-satisfaction, and a carload of excited kids (and even their dad, too), that we actually pulled into the Illawarra Fly Treetop Adventures carpark recently.

Of course, the infamously changeable Highlands weather was going to make the occasion memorable for other reasons. Where we'd been sweltering in above 30 degree temperatures for over a week, on this day we were looking at a chilly 10°C and the winds from Robertson and down the Jamberoo Pass were blowing a hooley. The others seemed unperturbed but the prospect of whizzing along in the tree canopy attached to a zipline with winds strong enough to blow the birds from the trees didn't thrill me much.

However, taking my 13-year-old's advice of 'Chillax, Mum', I made a concerted effort to avert my eyes from the swaying gums and focus on the experience.

The Illawarra Fly is owned by gargantuan international leisure group Merlin Entertainments, the world's second largest visitor attraction operator. And this is one operation with its stuff down pat. From the early morning call to check our arrival time to the actual zipline experience, friendly efficiency is the order of the day. Which is reassuring when you are flying in the air 35 metres up.

The Illawarra Fly was built 11 years ago on the edge of the rainforest escarpment. The 472 metre long treetop walk was built on an existing fire trail, so no trees had to be cut down, in six months by six extremely hard working men. With an average height of 710 metres above sea level, it has fabulous views right across Wollongong and Port Kembla in one direction, and across to the Blue Mountains in the north. Big accolades to our zipline guides Hamish and Andy (not the Hamish and Andy, but just as funny), who were extremely competent, friendly and well trained in zipline safety. Even our six-year-old, who had to wear a special so-called 'little monkey harness', was all ears to their instructions as we walked through rainforest thick with century old ferns to the zipline stairs. It is the highest zipline experience in Australia and can withstand winds of up to 280 km/hour (phew!). In total there are three ziplines, the longest more than 100 metres.

We reached the top, got clipped on to steel cables and then we were off, flying across the rainforest roof. What a blast! Traversing from tree to tree on a series of cable spans and suspension bridges, guide Andy zipped effortlessly down, followed by my hubby, our 13-year-old daredevil, our more cautious 11-year-old and the six-year-old, who looked so tiny dangling up there. Then came me and guide Hamish.

I loved the cable spans but the suspension bridges were more challenging, especially when the kids started bouncing up and down near the end while I was midway. Yikes. It's a long way down but I'd recommend giving the zipline a go (if you can) and then do the Treetop Walk, which includes a free guided tour at certain times.

All in all, my family loved it. The zipline tour was exhilarating and the kids were doing aerial backflips by the time it finished, and wishing it had gone on longer.

If you love nature and making memories that endure, this is one for the bucket list, and a great place to take visitors. Even worrywarts like me! illawarrafly.com

FOOD & WINE

KEEN OBSERVERS OF THE LOCAL TASTING TRAIL WILL HAVE NOTICED A COUPLE OF NEWCOMERS TO THE MAP IN RECENT MONTHS, AND THERE'S NOT A GRAPEVINE TO BE SEEN. **BEER TOURISM HAS ARRIVED IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS!** WORDS JANE O'CONNELL



DETAILS

**Southern Highlands Brewing
Company Kitchen & Taphouse**
490-494 Argyle Street, Moss Vale
southernhighlandsbrewing.com.au

From the moment Southern Highlands Brewing Company opened their Kitchen & Taphouse in the run up to Christmas, curious locals, thirsty visitors and long time fans of their hand crafted brews have tramped a steady path through the stylish front doors. Founders Cameron James and Ben Twomey and their team at the Moss Vale establishment have barely had time to take a breath, and they couldn't be happier.

The genesis of this upmarket watering hole goes way back. It took a love of rugby, decades of home brew experiments and a timely move away from corporate stress for their unique partnership to come about. Head brewer James is a third-generation Highlander who's been tinkering with home brews for more than 20 years. In 2014, his English India Pale Ale (IPA) won first in its class at the East Sydney Brewers Competition, and soon after James joined forces with Twomey. With their brewery in Sutton Forest up and running, the next stage was finding the right venue for their beer meets food tasting experience.

Travellers driving from Berrima to Moss Vale will see the Taphouse in its full art deco glory, commanding centre stage at the T-intersection where Waite Street meets Argyle Street. The venue is brasserie meets brewery, housed in the historic Tooses building with geometric window friezes and cast iron balustrades. The casually elegant interior, designed by stylist Tash Perkins, balances lavish with laid back, perfectly in keeping with the 'sophisticated yet playful' Taphouse brand.

The set up caters to a range of customers, with communal benches for family friendly gatherings, a plant filled lounge for quiet cocktails or table service dining on leather and velvet banquettes. There's also an outdoor terrace, ideal for watching the passing parade. Raw linen upholstery and wall fabrics are printed with motifs of Ambassador at large Hops the Roo, charmingly brought to life by Melbourne illustrator Chris Edser.

Ben Twomey, a former international businessman, is the commercial brains behind the Taphouse and brings an infectious enthusiasm to sharing his love of craft beer. And the timing couldn't be better. According to the 2017 Australian Craft Beer Survey conducted by Beer Cartel, a whopping 87% of craft beer drinkers are keen to learn more about different styles of beer.

'We'll start with beers from the lowest bitterness, and go to the highest,' Twomey explains. 'The lager will segue you to the Australian blonde, then to the American Pale Ale, which will take you up to the IPA.'

The beers are playfully named Firkin Helles (a sessionable lager), Naked Harvest (refreshing Australian blonde) and Tighthead (strong and reliable IPA) in a nod to their love of football. They also have a 'short, dark and handsome' porter they've dubbed Goodfather, with a dollar per litre sold donated to brain cancer research. Both James and Twomey lost their own fathers to the disease.

The all day dining menu is overseen by two hatted chef Michael Morrison (formerly of Bistro Moncur and Regatta), and includes a range of French inspired brasserie meals and a selection of vegetarian dishes. Friendly staff will happily recommend the perfect beer for each dish, while a carefully curated wine list, including a honey mead from local producers Bulwarra Bees, is available for those yet to discover the joy of craft beer. Morrison is also using it to make his aioli. The Kitchen & Taphouse is open for lunch Friday to Sunday and dinner Thursday to Sunday, but get there early to avoid disappointment, as the word is out.

Not bad for a couple of blokes from different paths who happened to run into each other on the rugby field. Their yin and yang combination of beer and business alongside plenty of good grub seems to have hit the right spot. **B**

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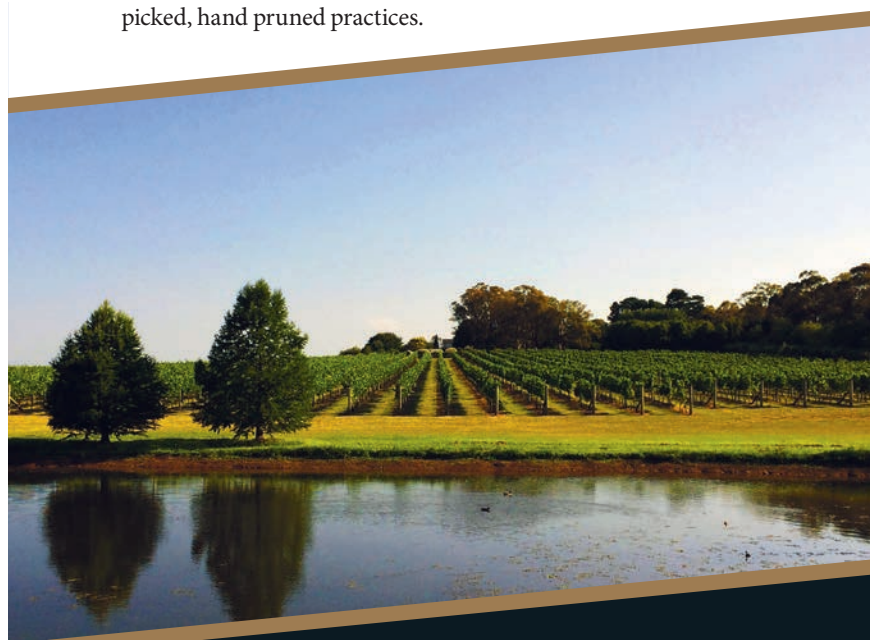
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ON YOUR PLATE

WORDS JILL DYSON

Apple Cart Produce,
at Farm Club Australia.
Image by Honey Atkinson.

DESPITE THE LACK OF RAIN, BY ALL REPORTS LAST YEAR TURNED OUT TO BE A GOOD ONE FOR LOCAL GROWERS. WHAT IS PERHAPS EVEN BETTER NEWS FOR OUR LOCAL ECONOMY IS THAT SO MANY SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS CHEFS, RESTAURANTS, CAFES AND PROVIDORES CONTINUE TO THINK LOCAL AND SUPPORT OUR PRODUCERS AND FARMERS. IF YOU'RE LOOKING TO DINE OUT, HERE'S A SNAPSHOT OF WHERE YOU CAN SAMPLE SOME OF OUR FINEST HIGHLANDS PRODUCE AT ITS ABSOLUTE BEST, AND WHO IS BUSY PRODUCING IT.



CLOCKWISE *Bulwarra Bees, Highlands Organic Dairy, Maugers Meats.*



THE PRODUCERS

On the producer front, many of our hardest working growers are kept on their toes supplying local chefs. Redleaf Farm supplies pork, lardo (which chefs love), lamb and eggs to many, including Josh's Restaurant in Berrima; Biota Dining, Onesta Cucina and Bistro Officina in Bowral; Moonacres Kitchen in Robertson and Birch in Moss Vale. Living Earth Farm's organic vegetable farmers Falani and Olivier Sofo sell from their website every week, and also supply local chefs in Bowral at Harry's on Green Lane and The Press Shop, Moonacres Kitchen in Robertson, and the Berrima General Store & Café. Ben and Anna Lohse of Apple Cart Produce, at Farm Club Australia, Wera keep Highlands Merchant stocked. Nicole and Lachy Feggans of Jamberoo Mountain Farm supply Stephen Santucci at Moonacres Kitchen in Robertson, and deliver 60 dozen of their free range eggs to HarbisonCare in Burradoo every week! John, Vicki and Mat of Maugers Meats supply chefs at more than 12 restaurants across the Highlands, including Katers at Peppers Manor House and Bernie's Diner in Moss Vale, Exeter General Store, Feast at Berrima, and many more in Bowral, Burrawang and Robertson. Deb and Greg McLaughlin are busy at Bulwarra Bees supplying chefs with their golden nectar at Centennial Vineyard Restaurant and several cafes in Bowral, and Moonacres Kitchen in Robertson. They are even producing their own Damsels Mead, which you can quench your thirst with at Bendooley Estate in Berrima, or the equally fabulous Southern Highlands Brewing Kitchen & Taphouse in Moss Vale (where chef Michael Morrison is also using it to help make his aioli). Pick up a bottle or two to take away at the award winning Destination Southern Highlands Welcome Centre in Mittagong. And don't forget some of the best places to get up close and personal with local producers are our markets (see our comprehensive guide on page 107). ■



BERRIMA GENERAL STORE & CAFE, Berrima

New owners Diego and Martina Arata have wasted no time cultivating good relations with local growers, sourcing free range pork and eggs from Taluca Park, organic vegetables from both Moonacres Farm and Living Earth Farm, and garlic and spuds from Russell, The Good Garlic Guy. Diego is also the only chef we are aware of who uses and sells bulk extra virgin olive oil from Currawong Olives just down the road. **0449 728 179**

BIOTA DINING, Bowral

James Viles, at his two hatted Biota Dining, has long been a champion of seasonal fare and smaller regional producers. In fact, he and chef Riley Aitken consistently work with a host of local growers, including Pecora Dairy, Redleaf Farm and The Good Garlic Guy. They also have an acclaimed wine list that features many of our region's vineyards. Read about the unique growing relationship Biota Dining has forged with Quarter Acre Farm and its 'do nothing' grower Jo Dodd (page 64), and find out why it's a fabulous place to take the family for Sunday brunch (page 57).

biotadining.com 4862 2005

BISTRO OFFICINA, Bowral

Chef Nico Coccia continues to push the boat out with his gutsy take on his grandmother's Italian dishes, helped by the growers of Moonacres Farm, Brillig Farm, Redleaf Farm and Living Earth Farm. Also, keep an eye out for menu delicacies such as beer sorbet, thanks to Nico's ongoing collaboration with the good folk at Eden Brewery in Mittagong. **bistroofficina.com.au 4861 7787**

MOONACRES KITCHEN, Robertson

It makes sense that a restaurant started by certified organic farmer Phil Lavers of Moonacres Farm in Fitzroy Falls should use the freshest of the fresh from that very farm. But chef Stephen Santucci also supports at least 10 other Highlands farmers. His shopping list includes free range pork and eggs from Taluca Park in Exeter; lamb from Redleaf Farm at Fitzroy Falls; pasture raised eggs from Jamberoo Mountain Farm; veal from Clara Bateman at Wildes Meadow; sheep's milk cheese from Pecora Dairy in Robertson; and milk, fetta and yoghurt from the Smillie family at Highland Organics in Moss Vale. Stephen also makes what we are reliably informed is the best cauliflower and bacon pie this side of the Macquarie Pass 'with falling apart chunks of bacon, the lightest parmesan pastry and a sensational herb, spinach, fennel and red cabbage salad'. Sounds so good we couldn't resist checking it out in our 24 Hours in Robertson & Burrawang (page 114). **moonacres.com.au 4885 1788**



While everybody is preoccupied with rabbits, chocolate eggs and the second coming, I find myself obsessing over apples at Easter.

Steve Jobs would have been proud, but wrong apple. Obviously we're talking about the pride of Tasmania; the scourge of doctors; the best reason to bake a pie, Adams nemesis... apple the fruit. The simple reason is, the forbidden fruit is at its best in the Southern Highlands around Easter. Actually, did you know the Southern Highlands was, in its heyday one of NSW's great apple growing regions? So, as a tribute to our lost past, let's get nostalgic and bake an Apple Tea Cake! First, let me share an Easter apple thought with you.

In the early part of the previous century, trains heading for Sydney were packed with apple laden wooden crates. Hand picking was done mainly by the orchardist's family, and fruit arrived fresh, crisp and only in season. Unfortunately, our orchards have been bought up and built on. That's OK (not really) because we can reverse the trend. The suggestion for all new home owners living on this sacred farming land... grow a couple of apple trees. It's simple. With thousands of new homes each growing their favourite apple trees, the orchards will have returned. It's kind of a second coming, rising from the dead, don't you think? Happy Easter! **E**



EASTER APPLE TEA CAKE

INGREDIENTS

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 125g butter | Vanilla extract dash |
| 125g caster sugar | 125g Self Raising flour |
| 4 Golden Delicious apples | 2 Tbsp slivered almonds |
| 3 Tbsp water | 3 Tbsp caster sugar, extra |
| 2 eggs | |

METHOD

- Melt the butter and caster sugar by placing in a microwave-safe bowl, then microwaving on HIGH for 2 minutes. Set aside.
- Peel, core and cut apples into 1.5cm cubes, then place in a microwave-safe bowl, add water and cover with plastic wrap and cook on high for 6 minutes. Carefully remove the wrap and tip the apples into a colander to drain excess moisture. Set aside.
- Put the butter mixture into the bowl of a mixer and aerate for 1 minute on medium speed. Add the eggs one at a time and mix on low speed. Add vanilla essence and mix through.
- Sift the Self Raising flour into the bowl and gently fold through until the batter is smooth.
- Pour the batter into a lined/greased 23cm tin. Top with the apple, slivered almonds, and sprinkle with the extra caster sugar.
- Bake in a preheated 160°C oven for 20 minutes, then increase the temperature to 185°C and cook for a further 10 minutes, or until the cake is brown on top. The cake is cooked when a skewer comes out clean. Serve warm or at room temperature. Serve with cream and/or vanilla ice-cream.



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Autumn Festivals & Feasts

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Grow Cook Eat Festival, Moss Vale

We love the dedication and community spirit of the committed local growers and organisers responsible for the fourth incarnation of the Grow Cook Eat Festival. Held at the old bowling club site in Moss Vale, where regulars go for the Moss Vale Railway Markets on Thursdays, this is where you will experience grass roots growing at its cracking best. A celebration of all the Highlands grows, the festival is host to a wonderful variety of stalls, including but by no means only: Sutton Forest Olives; Moonacres Farm of Fitzroy Falls for organic produce; Steve's Bees of Bundanoon; Brillig Farm of Exeter; Dewsburys Free Range Pork; Lame Duck sauces and condiments; Lady Bucket's Kitchen (if you love pate, you have to try Biddy's); Bowral Community Garden; and local ewe's soap maker and farmer, Harriet Turnnidge (again you must try her handmade soap, Aedel, because it's just gorgeous). Guest speakers include Jill Keyte (local author of *The Happy Hormone Cookbook*); Sam Costello of Brillig Farm (who will talk about growing vegies), Sylvia Cornwell on *Bee Aware: Protecting and Encouraging our Native Bees* and Joanne Dodd of Quarter Acre Farm (see our profile on page 64). There will be heaps of hands on activities, arts and crafts for the kids, and nature based activities with Kids Edible Gardens. Among the many food stalls you'll find wood fired pizza from the ovens of the Moss Vale Community Garden, and there will be live music and community information. A great place to take the pulse of the Highlands. Free entry.

Sunday March 18, 10am-3pm, Railway Parade, Moss Vale

Robertson Local Food System Tours

The good farmers and growers over in Robertson have organised a fabulous new initiative, Local Food System Tours. Organised by the inexhaustible Pi-Wei Lim (founder of Robertson's Crop Swap, which sees backyard green thumbs swap their garden glut Saturday mornings), these tours will start at either Crop Swap (or Robertson Markets



on Sunday April 8 only) and feature some of the area's best known farmers and producers. These include local potato farmer Warwick Hill, who will tell you everything you ever wanted to know about growing spuds; Phil Laver of Moonacres Farm, who will pose the question 'Why organic?'; Pi-Wei, also owner of Dtharowal Creek Orchards, who will walk you through her beautiful Asian pear orchard in full harvest and talk about her farming journey and how that fits into building a strong local food system; butcher and farmer John Mauger, who will give an insight into how he raises grass fed beef to become some of the Highlands' best meat. Afterwards you will lunch at Moonacres Harvest Kitchen in Robertson, where chef Steve Santucci will chat about a chef's role in the local food system, and the relationship he has with local farmers. A fabulous month long event not to be missed by foodies and those who want to learn where our food comes from.

Saturday April 14, 21 & 28, 9.30am-2pm; Sunday April 8, 9am-2pm. eventbrite.com.au/e/robertson-autumn-farm-tours-tickets-42451386239

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT
Robertson Local Food System Tours, Grow Cook Eat Festival, image: Andrew Toohey, Forage Feast.

RIGHT
The Celtic Tenors at The Loch.



Highlands Wine Harvest Feast, Canyonleigh

Katrina Hill is just one of the Highlands' wine success stories. Also a Sydney interior designer, Katrina is winemaker at boutique vineyard Far Ago Hill in Canyonleigh, and her Pinot Gris is served at high end restaurants like Aria. To celebrate the autumnal equinox and the grape picking season, Wild Food Adventures is throwing a Wine Harvest Feast lunch hosted by Hill on March 24 at Far Ago Hill vineyard. Feasters will dine on local produce accompanied by Far Ago's 2017 Pinot Gris, Syrosa and Shiraz, and have the chance to order 2018 vintages, special because Far Ago Hill doesn't have a cellar door. 'I'm both excited and nervous about opening my beautiful vineyard to wine and food lovers,' says Hill. 'Canyonleigh is spectacularly beautiful, but rugged. You see, grapes are weeds, and weeds like the struggle of rugged country. That's why we grow grapes that make sensational wine.' **Wine Harvest Feast, \$175 each from wildfoodadventures.com.au; Highlands Chauffeured Hire Cars are running buses to the event for \$27 return, hchc.com.au**



The Loch, Berrima

Brigid Kennedy, chef and Highlands dynamo, is hosting more fabulous paddock to plate feasts this autumn at The Loch, Berrima. Hightail it here for Brigid's traditional Easter Sunday seasonal paddock to plate set menu lunch on April 1. Events include an Easter egg hunt for the kids at 11am and 2pm in The Loch's lovely gardens. If Celtic not chocolate is more your thing, join Brigid on April 15 as she hosts The Celtic Tenors during

their 'Irish Songbook Tour'. Enjoy an afternoon of classical, Irish, Gaelic and contemporary songs, and some quick repartee while tucking into a set three course menu. Or if the meat lovers option is more your thing, The Feast of the Roast on April 29 is a seven course degustation including duck and spatchcock, Loch lamb, and beef and pork from Redleaf Farm, matched with local wines including from St Maur, Sutton Forest Estate and Tertini. Lip smacking. **The Loch, 581 Greenhills Road, Berrima; theloch.net.au**

Forage Fest

It's the up closer and more personal paddock to plate that really gets you out amongst it, uncovering, picking and cooking ingredients growing wild. Join chefs from Biota Dining on one of their Gather & Cook Adventures. Arrive at Biota, Bowral 9am for coffee and snacks before departing for a morning of foraging, gathering and cooking with Chefs. Arrive back at Biota by 2.30pm. Not available Sundays. Minimum two guests. **biotadining.com**



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WORDS ALEX SPEED IMAGES ELISE HASSEY

Chef James Viles is a leader; some might say a visionary. Certainly, he is a multitasking two-hatted chef who has arguably done more to put the Southern Highlands and some of his favoured local producers on the dining destination map than any cook before him.

A former Chevalier College boy who left school to join Milton Park's kitchen, before working around the globe with some of the world's finest chefs, Viles is presumably now living the culmination of his food dreams with his Zen-like restaurant, Biota Dining in Bowral. The word 'biota' refers to the plant and animal life of a region, and since Biota opened in 2011, Viles has taken paddock to plate and foraging for wild foods to a new level.



But Viles has not left it there. He recently launched Biota's Gather + Cook Adventures, where punters go out with his chefs to find plants and fruits growing wildly, and then cook and eat them. He has hosted Jamie Oliver, written cook books, and collaborated with any number of fellow brilliant young chefs far and wide, including MKR's Colin Fassnidge. Last year Biota was once again named one of Australia's top restaurants in The Australian newspaper's Hot 50 Restaurants.

Although increasingly in demand, James remains a hands-on owner/chef who seems to have no intention of hiding the reality of where food actually comes from to his 15,000 Insta followers. A freshly dead sheep with its throat cut lies beside a bloody knife in one recent post, with 'In between services on a Friday' as the caption. Another picture shows a kangaroo tail destined for a ragu 'served with warrigal greens in our jaffles'.

Nothing is off the menu because everything is on the menu. Which is what brings us (me, my husband, and our three kids aged 13, 11 and six) to Biota Dining recently. James introduced Biota's lounge menu last year to entice local families to come along and enjoy some fine, kicked back, casual dining in the lovely gardens, maintained by his mum, Cath. I recently saw Biota's setting described as 'parklands' which might be pushing it a bit, but certainly it is a delightfully inviting space with tables and umbrellas next to a water fountain in the courtyard, and comfy lounge chairs under umbrellas on the front lawns.

Viles is not there when we visit for lunch (Sunday is his away day with his wife and their small son and daughter), but people, including the folk at Good Food, which awards the esteemed Hats, only have great things to say about his second in command, chef Riley Aitken. So I inspect the menu with the hubby while my kids run off to the play area, which sommelier Ben Shephard says is a new addition that Viles had a hand in building. Even my 13-year-old is lured by the cubbyhouse, slide, swings and rope ladders.

We have foodie neighbours in our street in Moss Vale who are devoted regulars of Biota's lounge lunch. With three kids a little older than ours, their Mum told me this is always her kids' first choice when asked where they'd like to eat out.

When my kids return noisy, hot and hungry to the table, all eyes are on the menu, which advises 'our lounge menu, like all food, is best shared among friends and family'. And as we order, our waitress, Freddy (who it turns out is one of our old babysitters and eats here often with her own family), is a wonderful help advising on the menu.



The kids are soon sipping on delicious handcrafted botanical mocktails as we await tantalising sounding dishes, including cheese and mortadella croquettes, beef burger with gorgonzola and sweetened onions, fried potato scraps with whipped fresh trout roe, corn tortilla with pork belly and wild leaves, and southern style chicken and house ranch.

When it comes, the food is a revelation. The croquettes are pop in the mouth balls of tasty moreishness, the zingy fall apart pork a tasty combination with the corn tortilla, and the beef burgers (with the sweetness of the onions cutting through the picante of the gorgonzola) are cut in half and quickly demolished. Making much of local produce as well as using Biota's own from its vegie gardens (they also keep bees here) the butter lettuce with apple and creamed seaweed vinegrette cuts through the unseasonably hot 38 degree temperature that accompanies our lunch.

There is an extensive wine list that supports many local wineries, including Cherry Tree Hill, Tertini and Far Ago Hill, as well as the option to experience the lounge menu in a tasting menu format. For us, eating as a family at Biota was a fun, memorable and relaxed experience. When our neighbour said Biota was an exciting restaurant that encourages connection and great food, she was dead right. 🍷

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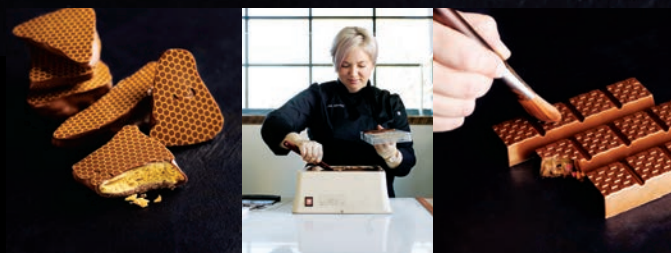
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Love the name. The name is very literal. The block is just over 1000m², which is a quarter of an acre. **Why did you start growing?** I have a Bachelor of Agricultural Science majoring in soil science and horticulture, so I'm constantly putting my knowledge to the test, and I couldn't afford a big farm! I've also been a low income earner for much of the 13 years I've been here, so growing food was important for saving money. **Is growing in your blood?** Absolutely. I have a rich agricultural history with both my grandfathers and my mother being excellent food gardeners on urban scales. **Is the Southern Highlands a great place to grow food?** Brilliant! We have a range of crops we can choose from that won't grow in warmer climates. I have over 14 different varieties of berries alone! Our relatively short summer growing season and late frosts are our biggest challenges. **In this world of consumerism, you embrace 'do nothing' farming. Please explain.** My farming hero is Masanobu Fukuoka, the 'do nothing' farmer. His philosophy of minimum intervention and letting nature do the work resonates with me. I've always had a strong sense of environmental ethics, ever since I was a child and we moved to Tasmania at the time of the Franklin River Dam campaign. A frugal life of recycling, repairing and reducing consumption is how I choose to live. After all, the best things in life aren't things. **You and chef James Viles of Biota Dining share a sustainability ethos. What is it?** I like to eat close to the sun where it shines, and the rain where it falls, and we live in an area with so much productive potential that freighting in food and burning fossil fuels seems ludicrous. James has been a fantastic advocate for regional and seasonal food, and a valuable supporter of local producers. **Foraging is still hot among foodies. For you too?** I love to go pine mushroom and slippery jack (wild mushroom) foraging in the pine forests in autumn. It's the thrill of the 'hunt' that I like more than anything.

You operate in the 'gift economy'. What is that? My time and produce are given freely to the few restaurants I supply, without calculation of dollar values or expectation of exchange. Of course, the gift economy works in return, I call them unwritten free trade agreements. **What are some of your more unusual plants?** I am an edible plant nerd. A few include Chinese artichokes, yacon, skirret, salsify, water chestnuts and hops. Some of them end up at Biota, but the hops last season went to Eden Brewery for their Ironbark Red Ale. **You use whatever you have... guinea pig poo to fertilise, mesh curtains to net fruit trees. What are your tips for low cost, high yield producing?** Many people won't have a go because they think gardening is hard work and too technical, but it doesn't have to be that way. Provide water and habitats for the 'good' bugs so they do the pest control for you. Feed the soil. Healthy soil will produce healthy plants that are less vulnerable to pests. Let plants go through their whole life cycle to seed, and forget the notion of neat and tidy plants growing in grid patterns or using strict rotations. Embrace 'ugly' fruit and vegetables as the norm. Their imperfections are signs of beauty in toxic free growing. @quarteracrefarm 🌱

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GOLFERS' PARADISE

Your handy guide to the many fantastic golf courses of the region.

WORDS JO CROWLEY

Bowral Golf Club

18 holes – par 69
Kangaloon Road, Bowral

Open to the public seven days including competitions. Bookings essential.

Professional: Kevin Kenny and Daryl Purchase

Cost to play: Visitor \$38.50, twilight \$20. Clubs and carts available to hire.

Lessons: \$50 individual. Groups and beginner clinics catered for.

Dress: Neat golf attire.

Hardest hole: 18th – 409m, par 4. A narrow fairway with a 240m carry off the back tee to get over the water, then uphill to a sloping green.

Toughest green: 16th.

Two bunkers and a right-to-left slope.

Additional facilities: Putting green, practice area, croquet lawn. Full club and bar facilities. Functions catered for.

Contact: 4861 1042;
bowralgolfclub.com.au

Gibraltar Country Club

18 holes – par 70
Boronia Street, Bowral

Open to the public seven days around competitions. Bookings essential.

Professional: Tony White

Cost to play: Weekday \$35; weekend \$40

Lessons: Groups and beginner clinics catered for.

Dress: Neat golf attire.

Hardest hole: 9th – 380m, par 4. Uphill all the way.

Toughest green: 2nd. A tough slope back-to-front and bunkered on the right.

Additional facilities: Putting green, practice area, full club and bar facilities. Driving range and aqua range facilities available. Functions catered for.
Contact: 4862 8615;
gibraltarbowral.com.au

Peppers Craigieburn

9 holes – par 32
Centennial Road, Bowral

Open to the public seven days.

Cost to play: \$15 for 9 holes.

Clubs available for hire.

Lessons: On request.

Dress: Neat golf attire.

Hardest hole: 4th – 180m, par 3. Up a hill and over a ridge. To make par you can have only one shot on the approach to the green.

Toughest green: 4th.

Needs a good approach.

Additional facilities: Full club and bar facilities. Functions and conferences catered for. Luxury accommodation available at Peppers Craigieburn.

Contact: 4862 8000;
peppers.com.au/craigieburn

Penrose Golf Club

9 holes – par 31
Kareela Road, Penrose

Open to the public seven days.

Cost to play: \$17 for 9 or 18 holes. Clubs and carts available for hire. Guests of Sylvan Glen play for free.

Lessons: Residential golf school.

Dress: Neat golf attire.

Hardest hole: 5th. Plays over water to a narrow green with a steep face
Toughest green: 5th. Rolls back to front with a steep bank

Additional facilities: Coffee shop. Accommodation and function facilities are available at the Sylvan Glen Country House.

Contact: 4884 4306;
sylvanglen.com.au

Moss Vale Golf Club

18 holes – par 71
Arthur Street, Moss Vale

Open to the public seven days around competitions. Bookings essential.
Professional: Steve McRae
Cost to play: 18 holes – \$35. Clubs and carts available for hire.
Lessons: From \$50. Groups and clinics catered for.
Dress: Neat golf attire.
Hardest hole: 18th – 378m, par 4. Dogleg hole turning left around a large gumtree with a natural waterway in front of the green.
Toughest green: 14th. Very undulating with a bunker to the left.
Additional facilities: Clubhouse bistro serves lunch Tuesday-Sunday and newly revamped restaurant Shotz serves a French inspired brasserie menu Friday and Saturday nights by former Centennial chef Ben Riley.
Contact: 4868 1503; mossvalegolfclub.com.au

Kangaroo Valley Golf and Country Resort

18 holes – par 71
Mt Scanzi Road, Kangaroo Valley

Open to the public seven days; both members and visitors are welcome to play in competitions.
Cost to play: Weekday \$55, weekend \$65.
Includes motorised cart hire. Clubs and additional carts available for hire.
Lessons: On request.
Dress: Neat golf attire.
Hardest hole: 7th – par 4. Difficult driving hole with narrow fairway which rolls right to left. Second shot is up a steep incline and the green has two tiers.
Toughest green: 13th. Slopes back to front with two tiers.
Additional facilities: Practice fairway, chipping and putting practice areas. Full club and bar facilities. Functions and conferences catered for. Accommodation is available in rustic wood cabins and luxury two and three bedroom villas located right around the resort.
Contact: 4465 0200; kangaroovalleygolf.com.au

Mt Broughton Golf and Country Club

18 holes – par 72
Kater Road, Sutton Forest

Open to the public seven days around competitions.
Professional: Larry Canning
Cost to play: Weekday \$50, weekend \$70. Clubs and carts available for hire.
Lessons: \$50 per hour. Groups and clinics catered for.
Dress: Neat golf attire. Strictly no denim.
Hardest hole: 2nd – 227m, a long par 3 with lots of water. Often plays into the wind.
Toughest green: 15th. Slopes right to left and guarded by two big bunkers.
Additional facilities: Full driving range, chipping and putting practice areas. Full club and bar facilities. Functions catered for by Southern Highland Wines. Accommodation available at Peppers Manor House.
Contact: 4868 3200; mtbroughton.com.au

Highlands Golf Club

18 holes – par 70
Old Hume Highway, Mittagong

Open to the public seven days around competitions.
Professional: Tegan & James Purcell
Cost to play: Weekday \$29, weekend \$35. Clubs and carts available to hire.
Lessons: \$55 per half hour. Groups and clinics catered for.
Dress: Neat golf attire.
Hardest hole: 6th – a long 390m drive slightly uphill to a raised green guarded by fairway bunkers.
Toughest green: 14th. Features treacherous slopes to the left and right.
Additional facilities: Full club-fitting service, putting green, full club and bar facilities. Functions catered for.
Contact: 4871 3274; highlandsgolfclub.com.au

Stay & Play GOLF PASS

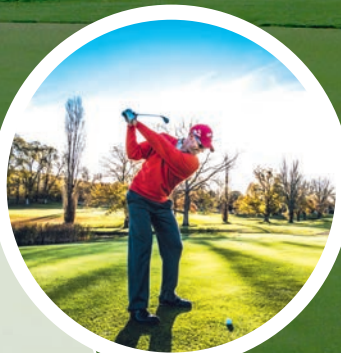
Southern Highlands NSW Golf Pass includes 6 rounds x 9 holes of golf totalling 54 holes that can be played at any Southern Highlands Golf Course plus Kangaroo Valley Country Club.

Valid Sunday to Friday until December 2019

Pass Costs \$89.00

Purchase the Pass from the Destination Southern Highlands Welcome Centre Mittagong.

(Conditions apply) ⓘ





See Autumn

GOT FRIENDS VISITING, OR LOOKING TO DO SOMETHING YOU'VE BEEN MEANING TO DO FOR YEARS BUT NEVER HAVE? BECOME A TOURIST/TOUR GUIDE THIS AUTUMN AND DISCOVER/REDISCOVER THE HIGHLANDS.

'Because of the changing seasons!' is a popular refrain by locals when asked why they love living in the Highlands. See the leaves turn at these great places:

Cherry Tree Walk Bowral

Home to the Vietnam War memorial, this wide pathway is lined with 526 cherry trees, one for each of the young Australian men who died during that conflict. Gorgeous in autumn (also sublime in spring when the trees are blossoming).

Milton Park

Designed by the English School of Landscape and brought to life by Mary Bullmore Packer, who married owner Anthony Horden in 1932, five star resort Milton Park has one of the most famed gardens in

the Highlands. The trees number 10,000 and include beeches, oaks, more than 100 maples and an avenue of 40 giant elms. Stay here and be immersed in the autumnal aura.

miltonpark.com.au

Retford Park

The home of the late James Fairfax, these now National Trust gardens are resplendent with a magnificent collection of evergreen and deciduous trees, some rare and unique. From March the gardens will open the first weekend of every month, with the house and garden open the first week of May from 10am-4pm. Also check out pages 20 and 102 to see special events planned in autumn. A unique national keepsake.

nationaltrust.org.au/places/retford-park

Remembrance Drives

A series of tree plantings and memorial stones commemorating losses in World War II and in conflicts since, and honouring recipients of the Victoria Cross. These drives run from Sydney to the War Memorial in Canberra. The local Remembrance Drive runs from Moss Vale, and through Berrima and Mittagong. And don't forget to pop in on favourite gardens such as Red Cow Farm in Sutton Forest, and Perennial Hill and Chinoiserie in Mittagong along the way (check websites for opening hours and details). Of course, if freestyling is not your thing, put the Southern Highlands Botanic Garden's Open Garden Weekend over April 21-22 in your diary. The six stunning gardens on the list are not generally open to the public (more on page 23).

remembrancedriveway.org.au; shbg.com.au

Chatoyance

See work made by Studio Woodworkers Australia master furniture makers and designers and their collaborative efforts with newer makers. Invest in an heirloom. Until April 8. **Sturt, Australian Contemporary Craft and Design, Range Road, Mittagong; sturt.nsw.edu.au**



The Bangles

Make yourself a set of three textured hammered sterling silver bangles with acclaimed local jewellery maker Tracy Hopkirk in these exclusive Saturday four hour classes for only five students at a time. All materials and tools provided. Good arm strength required as long periods of hammering involved. **March 10, 17 and 24. Contact Tracy alloy@hinet.net.au**

Two Wheels not Four

Not too hot, not too cold (and no swooping birds), autumn is a perfect time to saddle up and get biking around some of our great bike tracks and mountain bike trails. Owner of the Fixed Wheel bike shop in Bowral John McGill, a major sponsor of The Bowral Cup track event and to the Willo Enduro mountain bike challenge at Wingello, and a supporter of the Bowral Classic and the Southern Highlands Cycle Club, as well as

The Fixed Wheel Race Team has created a handy series of bike path maps for mountain bikers, road cyclists and families. Routes detailed include from Wingello State Forest through to Moss Vale, Bowral and Mittagong, and out to the northern villages. Each provides a steer on required fitness levels, distance, altitude and time to allow. Grab your copies at The Fixed Wheel, DSH, coffee shops around town. **thefixedwheel.com.au Unit 15/63-69 Kirkham Road, Bowral**



CULTURE CLUB

SO MANY ART EXHIBITIONS, PLAYS, MUSICAL FESTIVALS AND BOOK READINGS, SO LITTLE TIME. HERE'S A FEW WE WON'T BE MISSING:

Steel, Paper, Paint

When she's not sculpting works from steel offcuts for shows such as Hillview Sculpture Exhibition, Moss Vale artist Lucinda McDonald is in the studio painting. English born, Lucinda trained at Chelsea Art School in London and later worked at Mike Smith Fabrications, which made works for Damien Hirst and Rachel Whiteread. Catch her solo show Steel, Paper, Paint from May 31 and catch other great shows in autumn at Bowral and District Art Society. **bdasgallery.com**

Emma Pask

If you love jazz, you'll know Emma Pask (James Morrison calls her 'the real thing') and if you know the Highlands, you'll know Bendooley Estate. Join Emma for an intimate dinner and show in the Book Barn; quite the delicious combination. **May 17, 7.30pm; bendooleyestate.com.au**

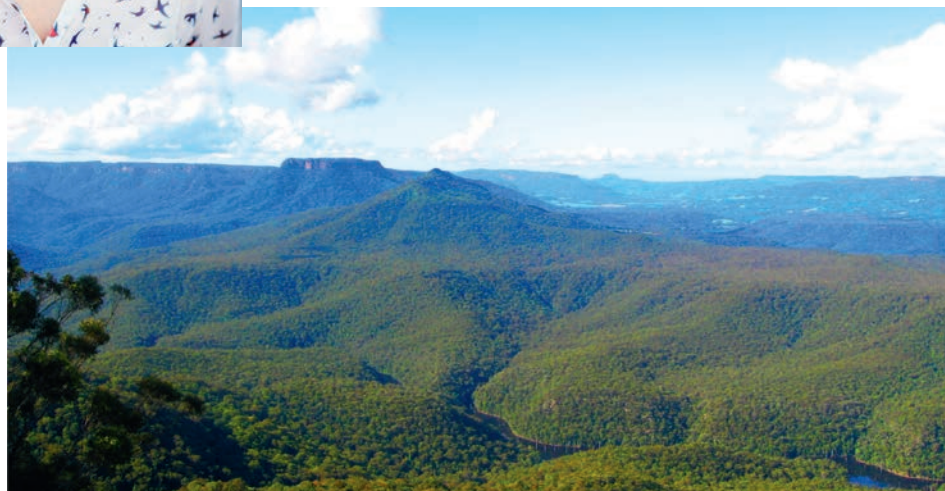


Off the Beaten Track

If you hanker to get off the beaten track and discover some of the State Forests and National Parks around but don't know where to start, Southern Highlands Bushwalkers Inc holds its walks from February to December. Walks vary in level of difficulty and locations, and non members are welcome to join a walk for a \$2 fee. Member Brett Neil says his favourite bushwalk is to Wombat Hill Lookout in Morton National Park south of Moss Vale, where he leads a walk every year. 'The views down to the drowned valleys of Lake Yarrunga are quite spectacular.' **bushwalkingnsw.org.au**

Tweet of the Week

There are 250 different species of birds in the Highlands, and as many gear up to migrate to warmer climes, autumn is a good time to go twitching. Birdlife Southern Highlands holds two trips a month, or if you prefer to go freelance, check out its fabulous map on the best areas to see our feathered friends on the Wingecarribee Shire Council website. **birdlife.org.au; wsc.nsw.org.au**





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LINK/David Ball
Image © Brian Rapsey / Rhapsody Pictures

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April 28 ➤ May 27 2018

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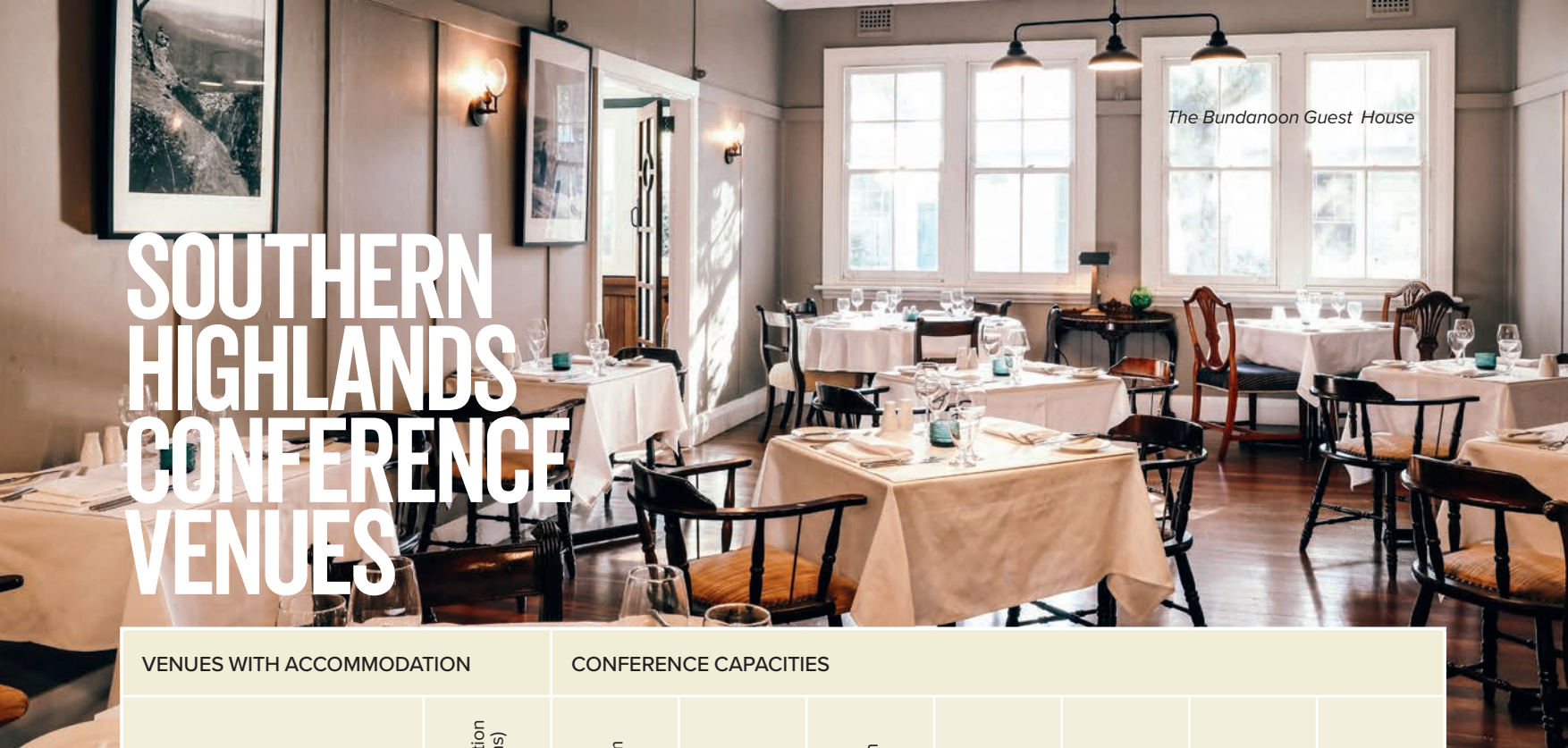


Allan Mackay Autos



VENUE HOST





The Bundanoon Guest House

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS CONFERENCE VENUES

| VENUES WITH ACCOMMODATION | | CONFERENCE CAPACITIES | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| | Accommodation (no. of rooms) | Boardroom | U shape | Classroom | Theatre | Cabaret | Banquet | Cocktail |
| Berida Hotel, Bowral | 42 | 26 | 22 | 60 | 100 | 30 | 60 | 120 |
| Briars, Bowral | 32 | 40 | 30 | 80 | 120 | 80 | 150 | 180 |
| Bundanoon Country Inn Motel | 21 | 24 | 36 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 |
| Bundanoon Guest House | 16 | 34 | 30 | 25 | 60 | 20 | 40 | 60 |
| Dormie House, Moss Vale | 32 | 40 | 30 | 60 | 120 | 45 | 90 | 140 |
| Gibraltar Hotel Bowral | 76 | 75 | 75 | 180 | 300 | 200 | 280 | 400 |
| Killarney House, Bundanoon | 15 | 16 | 25 | 30 | 60 | 25 | 40 | 70 |
| Links House, Bowral | 17 | X | 25 | 30 | 40 | X | 40 | 60 |
| Milton Park, Bowral | 46 | 45 | 75 | 150 | 300 | 130 | 200 | 250 |
| Mittagong RSL | 71 | 80 | 80 | 200 | 450 | 200 | 350 | 500 |
| Peppers Craigieburn | 72 | 50 | 60 | 120 | 200 | 130 | 180 | 200 |
| Peppers Manor House, Sutton Forest | 43 | 40 | 38 | 80 | 120 | 40 | 60 | 140 |
| Sylvan Glen, Penrose | 20 | 40 | 45 | 60 | 50 | 60 | 100 | 100 |



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A full-page photograph of a wedding couple in a romantic pose. The bride, wearing a light pink, tiered, lace-trimmed gown and a floral headband, is looking up at the groom. The groom, in a dark blue suit with a pink boutonniere, is looking down at the bride. They are standing in a field with tall grass and a small stream in the background. A tree with vibrant autumn leaves (red, orange, and yellow) is in the foreground on the left, partially obscuring the couple. The overall mood is romantic and picturesque.

Adventurous Love

AFTER BECOMING ENGAGED WHILE HUSKY SLEDDING IN FINLAND, **SYDNEY COUPLE MONTANA TOZER-CHAHINE AND CHRIS ADAMS** NEEDED A PRETTY SPECIAL WEDDING VENUE TO TOP THAT MAGICAL EXPERIENCE. THEY FOUND IT AT MALI BRAE. PHOTOGRAPHER HOLLY PRINS CAPTURED THEIR MAGICAL SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS DAY. ►



Cupid likes opportune moments. Montana and Chris met at their mutual friend Kirstie's wedding. Kirstie, Montana's best friend, was studying engineering with Chris at University of Technology. And it wasn't long after they met at her wedding, that Cupid started firing arrows their way.

'I knew Montana was the one when I saw how caring and loving she was even when we had only been dating a short time,' says Chris, a civil engineer working on the Northwest Rapid Transit at Castle Hill. 'She brought me chocolates on my first day as an undergraduate engineer while I was still at university, and I knew right then that I loved this woman.'

Montana, a promotions officer with the Heart Foundation, says it was the belief Chris showed in her during those early days, and that 'he always does whatever he can to bring a smile to my face', that sealed the deal for her.

The adventure loving couple got engaged at the tail end of two months in Europe in winter time.

'We were husky sledding in the northern Finnish town of Rovaniemi,' recalls Montana. 'During a break on the side of a frozen lake, Chris got down on one knee, waist deep in snow and surrounded by all the huskies, and the sky the most beautiful sunrise pink.'

This dusky pink colour became pivotal to their wedding theme. Montana walked down the aisle at Mali Brae Farm in a dusty pink Mia Solano tulle wedding dress with her mum, who gave her away. Photographed so beautifully by

Holly Prins, the couple found Mali Brae thanks to photos on Holly's Instagram feed. Neither come from the Southern Highlands, with Montana growing up in western Sydney and Chris in the Blue Mountains, but they were instantly sold when they visited Mali Brae, a boutique property set on 36 hectares near Moss Vale.

The property has six locations to choose from for the wedding ceremony, and the reception area is a renovated hay shed with French provincial tables, chandeliers, an open fireplace and an enclosed outdoor bar with open fire. There are also two renovated heritage cottages that sleep up to six people in total.

'Mali Brae is more amazing in person than a photo could ever capture, even though Holly's photos make it pretty amazing,' says Montana. 'It's a naturally beautiful, intimate, romantic venue and it has an amazing lake with a boat

house, as well as roaring fireplaces in the reception area to keep everyone toasty.'

The couple were intent on making their wedding as personal as possible and wrote their own vows with the help of local marriage celebrant Nina de Borde. Montana's mother picked up boxes and boxes of rose petals from Sydney's flower markets the morning of the wedding, and their 50 guests threw these during the wedding. The couple also made their own personalised bonbonnières, which were chocolates with the details of their wedding day as wrappers for guests to take home, or eat on the way home.

'We wanted a small, intimate wedding so that we could actually speak with all of our guests and make them know how important it was they were part of the day,' says Chris.

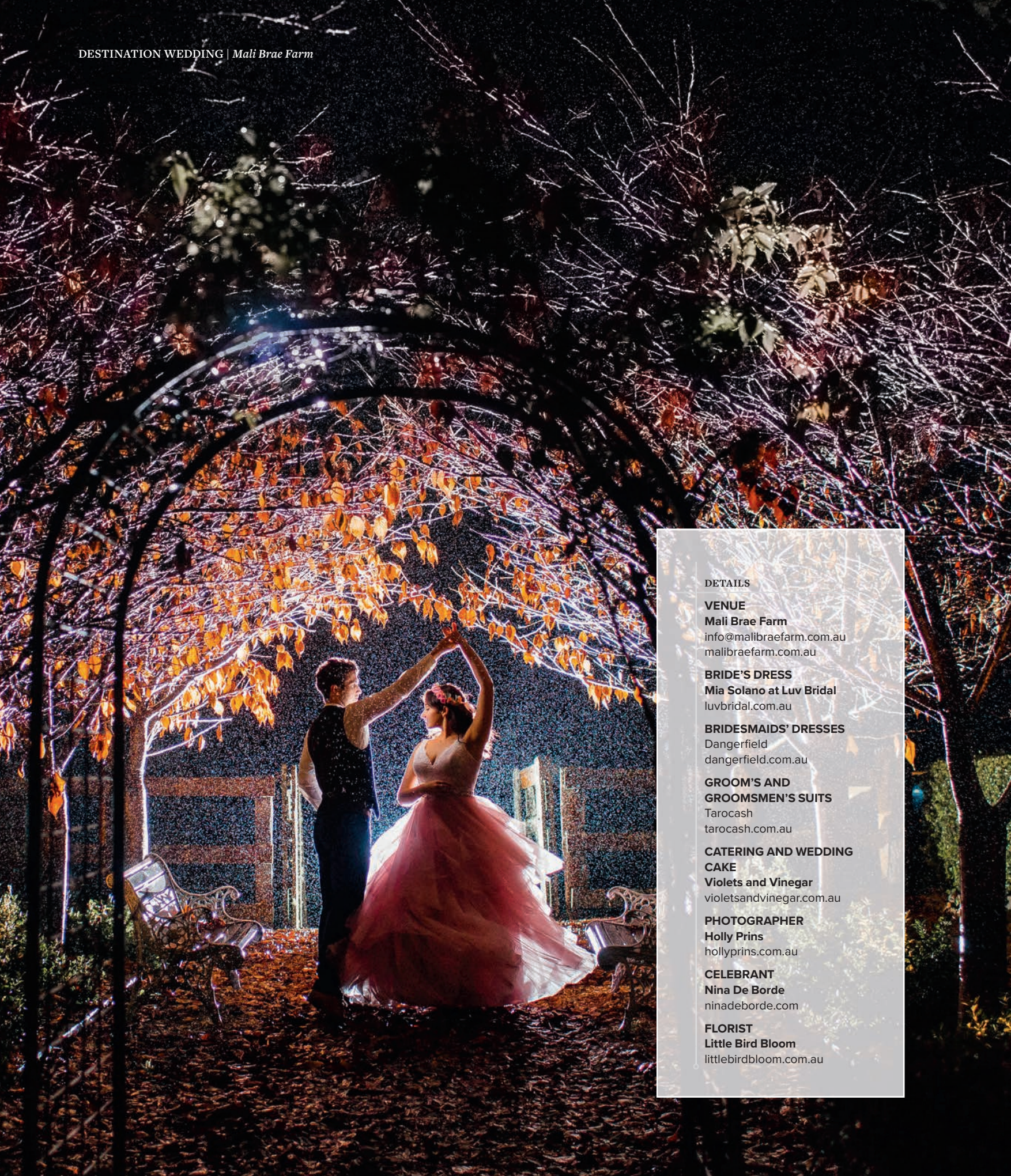
Montana, who made a wedding playlist with contributions from many of the guests, says rather than describing the day as 'everything we hoped it would be, we think it was everything we planned it to be'.

And true to form, the couple began married life on an adventuring honeymoon: two weeks in Iceland touring in a four wheel drive, a week in Morocco's Marrakech, and finally a week in Hong Kong.

'We felt this way we would get a bit of everything we love... nature's wonderlands, relaxing in the oasis that is Marrakech, before finishing off with wonderful food and shopping in Hong Kong,' says Chris.

'Montana and I will always be together, going on adventures together, forever into the future.' ►





DETAILS

VENUE

Mali Brae Farm

info@malibraefarm.com.au
malibraefarm.com.au

BRIDE'S DRESS

Mia Solano at Luv Bridal

luvbridal.com.au

BRIDESMAIDS' DRESSES

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dangerfield.com.au

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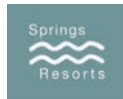




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Alongside our own David Ball (winner of last year's Sculpture by the Sea) and living legend Ron Robertson-Swann, Peter Lundberg is one of the headline names at Hillview Exhibition of Contemporary Sculpture this autumn.

A former mathematician turned 'mud and blood' sculptor, Lundberg created the monolithic concrete work, *Walking Woman* (left) and his work on our front cover *Untitled* which he cast in the earth at Hillview. 'Art and mathematics are more similar than you might think,' says Lundberg, who splits his time between a foundry in China, where he makes much of his work, and his US home in Vermont. 'They are both abstract languages that speak about the world we live in.'

STRICTLY SCULPTURAL

Meet some of the extraordinary talent behind the works on show at one of the Highlands' creative highpoints, Hillview Exhibition of Contemporary Sculpture.

WORDS ALEX SPEED

TAKE A DRIVE ALONG THE ILLAWARRA HIGHWAY FROM MOSS VALE TOWARDS SUTTON FOREST, AND THAT'S ANOTHER GARGANTUAN WORK BY LUNDBERG ON THE LEFT IN **HILLVIEW'S FRONT PADDOCK**. RUNNING FROM **APRIL 28 TO MAY 27**, THE EXHIBITION WILL FEATURE **100 OUTDOOR AND INDOOR SCULPTURES AROUND THE 60 HECTARE PROPERTY**, SAY CO-CURATORS DAVID BALL AND AXEL ARNOTT, AND IS EXPECTED TO ATTRACT MORE THAN 25,000 PEOPLE. WE TALK LIFE, LOVE AND SCULPTING LONGEVITY TO **THREE OF THE CUTTING EDGE SCULPTORS INVOLVED**.



Margarita Sampson

I GREW UP ON NORFOLK ISLAND. WE HAD **NO TELEVISION AND A NATURAL OUTDOOR PLAYGROUND**. THE STRANGE CREATURES OF THE UNDERWATER REEF STRONGLY INFLUENCED MY IMAGINATION, SO MY **HUMAN/NATURE BORDERS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN POROUS**.

What inspires your sculpture? Living ecosystems. My work is a way for me to express some part of their complexity and interdependence. As my sculptures have grown larger, my partner, Bugs, has become more involved in the engineering and fabrication. He's a telecoms engineer but he's very handy with steel and wood construction. There's a lot of scribbling on the backs of envelopes.

What questions does your work ask? I like making things that are neither one thing nor another. They float between states. For me, the actual artwork is the dialogue between the viewer and the initiating work. If you think you know what you are looking at then it's all over. I want people to ask, 'What the hell am I looking at?'



There is often a fantastical feel to your work. What are some of the funniest comments you've heard from viewers? I moved away from painting into sculpture because I noticed people's response to sculpture is such a visceral one. I had a work in *Sculpture by the Sea* that had a lot of yellow slug creatures with open pink mouths looking like they were migrating across the rocks. I had a lot of conversations with older women about their hysterectomies, which I wasn't expecting.

What is your favourite medium? I love soft sculpture. We spend our lives in textiles from minutes after we are born through to being dressed in our favourite clothes and put into a box before being lowered into the earth. I also started using electronics about a year ago, and now I have works that can move around, make decisions. People give the works agency when they move. If the work gets stuck in a corner, people feel sad and help it.

What are you exhibiting at Hillview? An outdoor work, *The Grove*. My indoor work, *Honey-Fungus & Friends*, is an installation containing some pre-existing works inside a phantasmagorical room. We have taken furniture from Hillview and have created secret fungal forms spilling out of drawers, creeping across picture rails. It's like someone dropped acid in the teapot at an afternoon tea.

What are the three most important qualities for a sculptor to possess? A deep sense of curiosity, a sense of humour (for when things go pear shaped) and a smattering of charm.

And finally, what's your secret to a happy creative life? A really large tea mug. Cats. Low expectations.

Elyssa Sykes-Smith

I GREW UP IN NOWRA WITH MY MUM, A SINGLE MOTHER OF FOUR. WE SURVIVED ON A VERY SMALL INCOME. **EVERYTHING WAS UPCYCLED AND RECYCLED.** BUT THERE ARE MANY STUNNING NATURAL LOCATIONS NEARBY AND MUM FACILITATED MANY ADVENTURES IN NATURE. MY CHILDHOOD FORCED **A CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING ATTITUDE,** AND MUCH OF OUR FURNITURE WAS DISCARDED PIECES OF WOOD SCREWED TOGETHER. NOT VERY DISSIMILAR TO MANY OF THE SCULPTURES I CREATE TODAY.



Where do you live today? Still in Nowra, although I travel a lot with work. Sculpture in the Valley in Kangaroo Valley was my first sculpture exhibition. It was encouraging for a 17-year-old, as I was then to receive public feedback and to sell an artwork.

What do your works speak of? The universal human experience.

Is your sculpture always site specific? Mostly. My artworks are usually quite metaphorical as I see the site as a stage. My aim is to bring a site to life, to offer a new perspective and elicit a physical and mental engagement with the audience.

What inspires you? Connection. I draw inspiration from the complex, interesting relationships in my personal and extended life. The psychology of human interactions intrigues me.

What are you exhibiting at Hillview? Caught between Comprehension. It explores the emotive psychological process of being caught in a state of confusion with another person. It is the manifestation of the sad ending of a relationship onto the beautiful Hillview landscape. Art can be, and often is in some way or another therapy.

Many of your sculptures are high off the ground. You don't mind heights? I love working at heights! As my work has grown in scale, I have also come to love working with sculpture slaves (volunteers). I approach people who have certain skills or capabilities that I desire for the project while also posting an open call on social media. It's fascinating who is drawn to sculpture slaving, and I've met a lot of interesting people. Contact me via email if you'd like to volunteer!

Why do you mostly work in wood? Timber offers me flexibility. It's cheap secondhand, which allows me to work large scale on a budget. It's lightweight, easily sourced and transportable. I can use cordless tools, which enables me to work at basically any location (or height). And it's a beautiful, warm organic material.

What do people think about upon viewing your work? A lot of children immediately claim my sculptures look like dinosaurs, although I've never intentionally created a dinosaur sculpture, yet! Stagnation at Sculpture by the Sea last year depicted two cast concrete figures bound to the rocks with copper wire. Many people interpreted this work as commenting on the current refugee situation, which moved me and showed people are genuinely connected to the core of the idea. Of being stuck.

What are the three most important qualities for a sculptor to possess? Vision, creative problem solving and perseverance! ►





DETAILS

Hillview Sculpture Biennial

April 28-May 27

7277 Illawarra Highway, Sutton Forest
sculptureathillview.com

Angus Adameitis

GROWING UP IN SYDNEY'S HILLS DISTRICT, I SPENT A LOT OF MY YOUTH EXPLORING THE LOCAL BUSHLAND VALLEYS. THIS GAVE ME FREEDOM TO BE ADVENTUROUS, WHICH IN TURN TRIGGERED MY CREATIVITY.

Where do you live and work today? My workshop is in Sydney's Inner West. I find it's important to be close to the city, where energy and subcultures collide.

In a nutshell, please describe the sculpture you make. Ominous and voluptuous abstraction.

What or who inspires you to create? My father an architect and painter, whose passion for art and art making resonated with me from a young age. My inspiration has evolved from my interests in custom car culture, a wide range of music genres, arthouse film and, most importantly, the materials I sculpt with.

What do your works speak of? Abstract sculpture doesn't represent anything in particular, but rather stimulates emotions so the viewer can interpret the work any way they wish.

What questions does your sculpture ask? Successful art makes you stop and analyse what's in front of you. My intention is to challenge the viewer by evoking a sense of mystery, familiarity and obscurity.

To the untrained eye there is a sci fi feel to your sculpture... I'm often told my work has a sci fi element but this isn't intentional. I make all my sculptures in between working fulltime at a natural history museum. That allows me to self fund these strange objects. Sculpture is a resource heavy passion.

What do people generally think about your works? Exhibiting in outdoor public exhibitions is always entertaining when you're a fly on the wall. Comments don't affect what or how I continue making, but they do fascinate me. It's also satisfying to see the same people visiting exhibitions over the years, because I hear them change their thinking and becoming more appreciative towards more challenging sculptures.

What are you working on for Hillview? I'm making a new sculpture from polyurethane, which has given me total freedom to sculpt my own shapes and forms. It will be a progression from my previous works and will aim for a more minimal approach. David Lynch's films are inspiring me at the moment, so this may be reflected in the work.

What are the three most important qualities a successful sculptor needs to possess? Dedication, perseverance and sacrifice. Sounds like torture, doesn't it?!

What's the secret to finding success? For me, satisfaction is success, and challenging myself to push sculpture where it hasn't gone before. ■

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Structure/Nicholas Bray Landscapes
Image/Murray Fredericks



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WISHING YOU A VERY ORCHESTRAL AUTUMN

THE HILLS OF **THE HIGHLANDS ARE ALIVE WITH THE SOUNDS OF BACH, VERDI, BEETHOVEN AND BRAHMS THIS AUTUMN,** AS WELL AS WORKS BY CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN COMPOSERS, INCLUDING **OUR OWN MAY HOWLETT.**

WORDS **ALEX FITCH**

He's chairman of the Bowral Autumn Music Festival, and Dr Allan Beavis knows a thing or two about classical music. A renowned organist himself, Dr Beavis was past headmaster of the St Andrew's Cathedral School in Sydney for 17 years, during which time he strengthened its international reputation as a chorister school. He then became master at New College at the University of NSW.

Allan Beavis bought his first house in the Southern Highlands in Exeter in 1986 and moved here permanently in 1993. In 2006, while working in the office at St Jude's Anglican Church, Bowral (which happens to be the home of the magnificent 1899 Charles Richardson pipe organ), Beavis received a call from acclaimed clarinettist Murray Khouri, co-founder of the Australia Ensemble.

'Murray had an idea for staging a music festival and was looking for a home for it,' recalls Beavis. 'We met and everyone was favourable to the festival, which became known as the Bowral Autumn Music Festival. The rest, as they say, is history.'

This year's Bowral Autumn Music Festival (BAMF) will be held over the weekend of March 23-25, with eight concerts performed over three days. Its program sees the return of the dynamic Acacia Quartet (the festival's artistic director and former Frensham student Myee Clohessy is one quarter of this violin foursome) alongside soloists such as violinist Charmian Gadd, soprano Ayse Goknur Shanai, pianist Phillip Shovk, French horn player Robert Johnson organist Brett McKern who has family locally and harpist Verna Lee.



The Young Recitalists concerts, meanwhile, will show off the talents of 15 year old organist Makito Mizushima (winner of the 2016 Sydney Organ Competition, junior division), 14 year old cellist Lily Dai and 17 year old pianist Leanne Jin. Children from the Bowral Public School Choir will also sing at the festival.

Listen out for the works of Australian composers Gordon Kerry and John Peterson, as well as music by local composer May Howlett, during the festival. Nice touch that Dr Beavis, who is the renowned organist at St Jude's, will open the festival and play Organ Preludes by Alexandre Guilmant throughout the weekend.

'All the concerts, apart from the Young Recitalists with Lily Dai and Leanne Jin will be performed at St. Jude's,' says Dr Beavis. 'Throughout the centuries, the church has been one of the major patrons of classical music, so it is a nice fit.'

Concertgoers will have warmed up their clapping hands a week earlier (March 17 and 18) at the Southern Highlands Symphony Orchestra 2018 Series 1 Concerts at Bowral Memorial Hall. Formed four years ago under the stewardship of conductor Dr Allan Stiles, the SHSO has presented four concert series a year since, with a number of soloists from the Highlands, known nationally and overseas, performing with the orchestra.



The SHSO, with eminent composer patrons Ann Carr-Boyd and Andrew Ford, as well as conductor and educator Richard Gill, will this year pay homage to recently deceased Australian composer Colin Brumby by playing his Overture in Folk Style, written especially for the SHSO. Another very special item on the program will be the performance of London based Australian composer John Carmichael's Trumpet Concerto by Bowral's own virtuoso trumpeter, John Corley.

Thanks to Dr Stiles, who can be credited with bringing together musicians from the Southern Highlands, Campbelltown, Canberra and the South Coast, the SHSO has gained a reputation as one of the best regional orchestras in NSW.

Also on March 17, virtuoso and classically trained pianist

Kathryn Selby returns for a whistlestop performance in the Highlands for the opening of the Selby & Friends chamber music season. Beethoven by Ballot, to be performed at Mittagong Playhouse, will feature Selby on piano, violinist Grace Clifford and American Clancy Newman on cello. It offers a glimpse into the famous composer's chamber music oeuvre, including his Spring Sonata for violin and piano, which broke new ground at the turn of the 18th century with its sweeping lyricism, and the Archduke Trio, which was dedicated to his benefactor, Archduke Rudolf of Austria.

And if you enjoy your classical music al fresco, check out the Retford Park String Quartet as it serenades picnickers during the newly created Music in the Pool House event (see page 20). So much classical choice, so little time. 🎻



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT
Acacia Quartet Flying Music,
John Corley, Kathy Selby,
Retford Park String Quartet.



DETAILS

bowralautumnmusicfestival.org.au

(tickets from Powerpoint Music Centre,
409 Bong Bong Street, Bowral and Destination
Southern Highlands, 62-70 Main Street, Mittagong);

southernhighlandssymphonyorchestra.com;

trybooking.com/338197; nationaltrust.org.au/

places/retfordpark selbyandfriends.com.au



EMPORIUM OWNER JANE CROWLEY STARTED WORKING WITH HER FATHER, ATHOL SALTER, IN HIS ANTIQUE AND VINTAGE SHED WHEN SHE WAS SIX. TODAY THE PAIR RUN ONE OF THE **HIGHLANDS' BEST LOVED ICONIC SHOPPING HOTSPOTS, DIRTY JANES BOWRAL.**

WHEN JANE'S NOT HELPING SHOPPERS FIND *THAT* FABULOUS PIECE, SHE IS HAPPIEST WITH HUSBAND BOB AND THEIR THREE CHILDREN, OR TRAVELLING THE WORLD TO UNCOVER QUALITY TREASURES FOR US TO BEHOLD AND BUY.

ASK A
LOCAL

What do you love about the Southern Highlands? This is where my family are! Simple as that. This is where I live and love. **What's your favourite place to go in the area and why?** Well, apart from this great vintage market I know... we have some of the most beautiful unspoilt country roads, so I often take detours to enjoy the scenery.

What's your best advice for people moving to the Highlands?

Become involved in one of the organisations. Like SHYAC [Southern Highlands Youth Arts Council] if you're parents of thespian children, or Southern Highlands Symphony Orchestra concert to hear beautiful music.

Where do you live? In a lovely old rambling house in Bowral that we've called 'Gaffer's Rest'. Bob, my husband, is a bit of a LOTR (Lord of the Rings) fan. **Dirty Jane, the namesake of your business, was an Irish waif transported to Australia for theft who later founded a successful emporium. Any relation?**

Ha ha, no relation. Although I have been called every derivative of 'dirty' in the thesaurus! **How long have you and Athol been in business together?** Let's just say I was barely tall enough to reach the kitchen bench when I started by making the sandwiches for Dad as he headed off to auctions.

Some may be horrified at the idea of working with their dad for so long. What's your secret? We are both very glass half full people, and we never lay blame. This flows onto our amazing team at Dirty Janes. Be positive and supportive, and anything is possible.

What do you love about what you do? I love the creativity of the industry. To buy something run down and restore it gives such a sense of satisfaction. We buy all over the world, in Europe, the UK and North America, and what I never stop looking for is quality. The carving in a table leg, the rustic appeal of a picture frame, it all needs to show quality craftsmanship.

What's key to being a hugely successful retailer? I'll tell you when we get there. Dad always taught me to look for the unusual rather than the usual. It's what I stick to when I'm buying.

What's the best piece of advice you've ever received? I suppose the advice that I was given years ago rings true on an almost daily basis: 'Work with what you've got.'

What's the biggest challenge facing the Southern Highlands? Retaining our towns' identities. In the eagerness to cater to the demands of businesses and residents, we must foster an individuality that sets each town apart. Oh, and if our local councillors are reading this, Bowral township could do with a few more parking spaces. **Finally, if you weren't buying for and running Dirty Janes with Athol, what would you be doing?** Athol and I used to always have so much fun on buying trips together, egging each other on. Today Dirty Janes is too busy for us both to go together, but one day I'd love to book first class tickets and take Dad back to London to go to an auction at Christie's!

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Bowral Public SCHOOL MARKETS

Second Saturday 8am-1pm (except January)

Bendooley Street, Bowral

A lively and eclectic market with local produce and plants, handcrafted toys and children's clothing alongside fabulous food stalls to suit every taste.

BUNDANOON MAKERS MARKET

First and Third Sunday 8.30am-2pm (except January)

Bundanoon Memorial Hall, Railway Parade, Bundanoon
Sewers, knitters, woodworkers, photographers; leatherwork and silver jewellery; fresh fruit and vegetables, freshly baked bread, hot Indian dishes, Vietnamese meals, honey and eggs, cakes, hot pies and melting moments all make this market well worth the scenic drive to Bundanoon.

FRI-YAY STREET FEAST

THIRD FRIDAY 3.30-8.30PM

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CNR ALBERT AND ALICE STREETS,
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RAILWAY STREET FARMERS MARKET

Thursday 3pm-til 5pm last light

Old Bowling Club Green, Railway Street, Moss Vale

This popular produce market recently celebrated its 2nd birthday and boasts everything from fresh seasonal vegetables, eggs, fish, bread, quiches and pies, jams and pickles, and fresh cuts of beef, to plants and seedlings.

Moss Vale Night Market

Fourth Saturday of every month (kicks off when day markets finish)

4.30pm-8.30pm (except January) Moss Vale Showground, Illawarra Highway, Moss Vale

This new market, which runs from October to March, takes off in the evening with many more foodie stalls offering local produce. Plus, there's an outdoor cinema.

MOSS VALE MARKET

FOURTH SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH 9AM-2PM (EXCEPT DECEMBER & JANUARY)

MOSS VALE SHOWGROUND, ILLAWARRA HIGHWAY, MOSS VALE
FARMERS, ARTISANS, FOOD PRODUCERS AND GROWERS SELL THEIR WARES WHILE DEALERS AND PRIVATE SELLERS SET UP STALLS WITH TRASH AND TREASURES INCLUDING HOMEWARES, BOOKS RECORDS, CLOTHES AND FURNITURE. PERFECT FOR TREASURE HUNTERS AND THOSE LOOKING TO UNEARTH A BARGAIN.

Crop-Swap

Saturday 9am-10am, inside Rockabellas Roadside Diner, Hoddle Street, Robertson. Local producers and backyard growers gather to swap any excess seasonal produce from the back of a flatbed Ford truck, and catch up and check in with friends and neighbours. A wonderful community initiative that continues to thrive.

Kirkham Road Village Markets

Starting April - fourth Saturday of the month 8m-2pm

Kazcare grounds, 15-17 Kirkham Street, Bowral.

New foodie market organised by food doyen Jill Dyson (Escape's food writer) and the Cook's Cooking School Anna Phillips with fresh local produce, arts and crafts.

COLO VALE VILLAGE MARKETS

FIRST SATURDAY 9AM-2PM (EXCEPT JANUARY)
COLO VALE HALL, RAILWAY AVENUE, COLO VALE

WITH LOTS OF NEW STALLHOLDERS, AND OLDER ONES INCLUDING HANDICRAFTS, HANDMADE GOODS, JAMS, FRESH LOCAL PRODUCE, AS WELL AS A JUSTICE OF THE PEACE ON HAND TO HELP LOCALS OUT WITH LEGAL MATTERS, THIS CORNERSTONE OF THE COMMUNITY IS THRIVING AND IS A GREAT MARKET OFTEN WITH MONTHLY THEMES. ■

Exeter Village Markets

First Saturday 9am-1.30pm

Exeter Village Hall, Exeter Road, Exeter

One of the most picturesque markets, it is held at the local hall beside the community oval in Exeter. Features local producers, artisans, foodies and craftspeople, and there's a fabulous playground for the kids next to the oval.

ROBERTSON MARKETS

SECOND SUNDAY 9AM-2PM (EXCEPT

JANUARY) HODDLE STREET, ROBERTSON

A variety of stalls, food and refreshments at the School of Arts in the busy community of Robertson. Great trash and treasure finds and, of course, lots of local produce, including famed Robbo potatoes.

Berrima SCHOOLYARD MARKET

FOURTH SUNDAY 9AM-2.30PM
(EXCEPT JANUARY) AND SECOND
SUNDAY IN DECEMBER
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ARTS FOR ALL

AMANDA MACKEVICIUS TAKES A LOOK AT WHATS GOING ON IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS ARTS SCENE THIS AUTUMN.

It was poet Stanley Horowitz who said 'Winter is an etching, spring a watercolour, summer an oil painting and autumn a mosaic of them all'. So where do you find the mosaic of etchings, watercolours and oil paintings in the Highlands this autumn? Given the limited number of commercial art galleries in the area, the 'where' and 'how' of exhibiting and selling art in the Highlands is changing as both artists and retailers become more innovative in their approach to marketing work.

The boundaries of 'who sells what where' have well and truly blurred, if not dissolved completely, with 'diversification' seemingly now the norm. Original artworks (with price tags) are increasingly appearing in cafes and restaurants (like Bistro Officina in Bowral, Lucinda's Pantry in Robertson and The Shaggy Cow and The Glass Café in Mittagong), in homewares and lifestyle stores (Suzie Anderson Home, Bowerbird, Il Pranzo and Made by Others in Moss Vale; Few and Far in Bowral) and in vintage and antique emporiums throughout the Highlands (Lord Watson in Boolwey Street and Dirty Janes in Bowral; Hunters & Collectors Antiques and the Mittagong Antiques Centre in Mittagong, to name a few). Each month, the Foyer Gallery in the Wingecarribee Shire Council's Civic Centre in Moss Vale features the work of local artists, and in Bowral, the Bowral & District Art Society continues its ongoing support of local artists with an autumn calendar full of exhibitions and workshops bdasgallery.com Commissioned murals and street art are also making a welcome appearance, bringing art to a broader audience and life to many a brick wall, such as the two storey high floral mural by brilliant artist Jamie Preisz on the side of the Highlands Merchant cafe in Moss Vale. And we are loving the ever-changing street side front window at property company, Hindmarsh and Walsh in Moss Vale. Created by clever local stylist Tam Read, and more installation than window display, these works of art deliver a bit of colourful creativity, and touching tenderness in line with local events, and annual happenings like Valentine's Day.

MORE INFO

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT **EXHIBITIONS AT OUR LOCAL GALLERIES THIS AUTUMN**, PLEASE VISIT THEIR WEBSITES OR CONTACT THEM DIRECTLY.

Bowral District Art Society, 1 Short Street, Bowral, open 10am to 4pm daily; bdasgallery.com **Sturt Gallery**, Cnr Range Road and Waverley Parade, Mittagong; sturt.nsw.edu.au **Milk Factory Gallery**, 33 Station Street, Bowral; milkfactorygallery.com.au



Midwinter Spring - James Garden by Colin Lanceley

The Green House

On top of the 'must visit' list of alternate art venues this autumn is The Green House in the old Station Master's Cottage in Moss Vale. Part glamorous art salon, part enchanting garden nursery, the historic property (circa 1869) has been transformed by the talented Maureen Gardner, who with husband Chris created The Potting Shed, Harry's Bar, Green Lane and The Orangery in Bowral. Decorated in a grand country house, eclectic, vibrant portraits by artist Trent Nathan (yes, the famed fashion designer) are situated throughout the house. Inspired by Trent's friends and interesting or exotic people encountered during his years of travel, the fabulous paintings exude an energy and joie de vivre matched by their tireless and charming hosts.

247 Argyle Street, Moss Vale;
thegreenhousemossvale.com

Arthead and Artheart Gallery

Across the road at Arthead, proprietor and artist Sonja Millis has created a long window gallery across her double shopfront to display solo exhibitions by local artists. Featured artists will change every six to eight weeks. Sonja also operates the evolving Arthead and Artheart galleries further along Argyle Street, featuring work by the late Bob Millis and others. **278 Argyle Street, Moss Vale;** arthead.com.au

Heidi Garden Art

Also making the most of our great outdoors this autumn is much loved Highlands artist Heidi McGeoch (the 'Leunig' of bespoke garden art, gates and furniture) who will launch (or, rather, light up) her public art installation, 'Vessels of Change', at the Southern Highlands Botanic Garden on March 24 from 6pm. Heidi has used industrial 44 gallon drums from which organic shapes, joyous symbols and geometric motifs have been cut, transforming these ubiquitous vessels from somewhat bleak skeletal forms by daylight to glowing towers of warm light by night, suggesting hope, renewal and rebirth. All are welcome to this free event that also celebrates Earth Hour. **heidigardenart.com**

Retford Park tours

Always popular, Retford Park's Art and Culture Tours return in March. The grand Italianate style country residence (circa 1887) was gifted to the National Trust of Australia (NSW) by the late James Fairfax AC and is filled with an impressive treasure trove of art. Twilight guided tours showcasing this generous artistic legacy (complete with Champagne and canapes) can be booked via retfordpark@nationaltrust.com.au or call 02 4861 1933.

1325 Old South Road, Bowral;
nationaltrust.org.au/event/the-art-and-culture-of-retford-park/ ■



Trent Nathan works image by Ashley Mackevicius



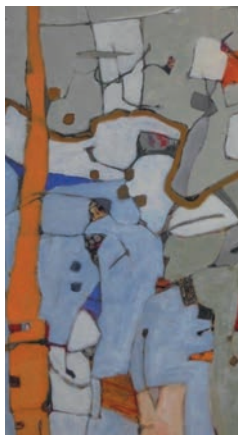
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bdasgallery.com



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My name is LISA WISKEN

I live in... Moss Vale. **I opened Highlands Merchant in...** June 2016. **I moved from...** North Queensland. **I chose Moss Vale because...** I believed there was room for another great cafe. **My three favourite things in the Highlands are...** Grand Bistro in Bowral for meals on my days off; getting to work with my mates every day; the changing seasons (in Queensland it's just hot and hot). **Followers on Instagram see...** Photos of our delicious food created by chef Ken Baker. Feel good words and images from Pinterest. I love a daily dose of digital high fiving. **When it comes to the food, you could describe the Highlands Merchant's style as...** Clean, fresh, contemporary, ever changing. **I most often get asked...** Who my builder and interior designer were (Andrew and Brielle Economos).

People who eat at Highlands Merchant come from... We have our everyday regulars plus travelling customers from far and wide who will often introduce themselves and say they've been following us on social media since day one. Always blows my mind! **Your clientele is attracted by...** We walk the talk. Handcrafted, locally sourced, kindly served. **I always tell people visiting the Southern Highlands for the first time to...** Head to Burrawang Village Hotel for a beer at sunset. **You shouldn't leave the Highlands without...** Spending a day in Moss Vale for the best collection of shops, bars and dining in the Highlands. **The biggest lessons I have learnt running my own business...** Be flexible, treat your staff well, listen to feedback and trust that everything will work out. It always does! **The one thing I would advise anyone thinking about doing the same...** Dream big, stay focused and surround yourself with good people. **What other dreams are still on your bucket list?** Highlands Merchant has been my biggest tick but as for the future, honestly, I'm not sure. I flip between opening a bar/boutique/second cafe weekly. I sense something else big is in my sights but I just don't know what yet. I'll stay open to any opportunities and trust that I'll make the right decision when the time comes.



When Lisa Wisken decided to open Highlands Merchant cafe in Moss Vale, people questioned her decision. "The common refrain was, "But there's no one there, why would you not open in Bowral?" says Lisa, who moved to the Highlands from Queensland in 2013 with husband Alex, a FIFO helicopter pilot, and son Fraser, now eight. But after a career in sales, marketing and events, Lisa was ready to follow her dream. "Once Fraser was old enough to go to day care a few days a week, I wanted to pursue a casual job working in a cafe where I could interact with the general public and have a small impact on people's day to day lives. No more desk jobs! I started working at a Flour Water Salt in Bowral and fell in love with the buzz you get from super busy days and the friendships you build with customers along the way. Today, Highlands Merchant lives by the ethos 'Locally sourced. Freshly made. Kindly served' and is a proud supporter of local farmers such as Apple Cart Produce and Taluca Park. 'Using small and local may cost a little more but I wouldn't have it any other way. We are supporting local families that work bloody hard and I love that these guys have become our mates along the way.' And 18 months after opening, Lisa feels her decision to go into the cafe business has been vindicated. 'I know a lot of people believed at the time I was overcapitalising and making a mistake, but that theory was very shortsighted. There are many, many folk who appreciate good food and coffee outside of Bowral. A million times over I had to remind myself 'build it and they will come'. And they did.' ■



@highlandsmERCHANT | highlandsmERCHANT.com.au



Grandpa's Shed

Grandpa's Shed was built in 1997 and has been operating as an antiques, old wares and collectables shed ever since. Overflowing with interesting memorabilia items, ranging from early farming and agricultural items to fine china, lamps, clocks, a huge selection of wooden boxes and so much more, it rivals any similar shops. Not just a shop but a destination — allow at least half an hour.

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7.30am: Rise and shine

Waking to the dawn chorus will fill you with joy, and birdlife is one thing there is a lot of in Robertson. So get yourself up out of your scratcher and get out amongst the magpies, cockatoos, kookaburras, cockatiels and parrots, all there to help you start the day on the right note. Robertson has an array of accommodation options from the newly restored Robertson Hotel with its rich history, the luxurious looking Linden Hall and the self-catering Roundhouse (see our review page 31), which all promise a proper country wake up call.

9am: Coffee and brekkie time

From most accommodation in Robertson, it's an easy stroll into town. The Old Cheese Factory was established in 1936 by local dairy farmers, and while sadly it doesn't make cheese anymore, it's a great place to stop for breakfast. Trains rumble past the enormous cafe window, and the Dairy Store and The Cool Room Emporium are great places to stock up on local produce (cheese by local dairy Pecora or homewares by Yorkshire Kitchen). Wander Hoddle Street to locally owned Sunrise Bakery and breakfast on a mean array of coffee, pastries, breads, cakes and pies (it was voted best for pies in Destination Southern Highlands' recent Pie Time and is a great place to refuel and meet some locals). If you love hot cross buns and it's the weekend, stroll up the road to the Petite Fleur Patisserie where they make consistently outstanding ones (open Saturday and Sundays only).



10am: Get out in it

The township of Robertson and its surrounds are perched atop an escarpment, providing stunning landscapes across the Macquarie Pass and Jamberoo. One of the best vantage points is 10 minutes' drive away at The Illawarra Fly, where the Treetop Walk provides views across Wollongong and to the Blue Mountains. You can also go daredevil on the Zipline Experience, the longest zipline in Australia (read our review page 46). Nearby Belmore Falls and Carrington Falls are glorious. Weather permitting, take an outdoor dip you'll never forget nearby in beautiful Nellie's Glen. Spud farming is big around Robertson, which explains the souvenirs available from The Friendly Grocer supermarket, and of course the iconic Big Potato (which is currently for sale, just in case you're interested). Visit on a weekend and meet local producers either at Crop Swap at the Bowling Club on Saturdays at 9am, or at the School of Arts markets every second Sunday from 9am to 2pm. Robertson also hosts many a foodie feast and festival (see page 54). Over at Burrawang, locals are gearing up for their biggest weekend of the year. The Easter Markets are held on Saturday March 31, with more than 100 stalls and 10,000 visitors expected in a big day for the little village.



CLOCKWISE The Illawarra Fly, Robertson Inn, Burrawang streetscapes, Moonacres Organic Farm



12.30pm: Viddles time

Chef Steve Santucci uses organic produce grown at Moonacres Organic Farm to produce delicious food at Moonacres Kitchen in Robertson. The smoky eggplant puree mixed with Highlands Organic yoghurt and Pecora Dairy's Jamberoo Mountain Blue and homemade sesame flatbread comes highly recommended. Pick up a jar of Moonacres fig, pear and earl grey jam or smoked chilli sauce to take home. Or if gastropub grub is more your thing, The Robertson Inn up the road has a corker of a menu and fabulous offers seven days for lunch (and dinner). ►



The Robertson

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2.30pm: Get creative

Time to head to Burrawang, a glorious 10 minute drive away, and amble slowly through the picturesque village that began life as a private settlement in the 1860s. Admire the historic School of the Arts and the prime real estate. Book a workshop at Maxton Cottage with one of the area's creatives like weaver Brooke Munro or Cassandra Angelini, creator of gorgeous Bougies de Luxe candles and bath products who holds her first workshop there in July. You'll find weaver Brooke Munro there, and Cassandra Angelini, creator of gorgeous Bougies de Luxe candles and bath products. Or join local butcher John Mauger on one of the Mauger Meats' paddock to plate tours.



4.30pm: Sit and sip a bit

Spend some time as evening falls sipping a Southern Highlands wine or larger in the newly renovated Burrawang Village Hotel's beer garden. Take a well earned nap before dinner in one of the hotel's newly renovated rooms.



7pm: Time for din dins

Head back into Robbo, and from Wednesday to Sunday you can start dinner decadently with a fabulous cocktail at local favourite, Pizzas in the Mist. (The Midori Spice looks spectacular!) We love the lamb souvlaki gourmet woodfire pizza or the Peking duck number. If you'd prefer not to drive, Burrawang General Store and Cafe is open for dinner Friday and Saturday (and seven days for breakfast and lunch, from 8am). Enjoy a digestive after dinner on the verandah or in the garden, watching the locals come and go, and dream about that tree change to the country. 🍷

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FUN FOR KIDS

LOOKING TO GET THE KIDS OUTSIDE DOING THINGS RATHER THAN COMPOSTING ON SCREENS? HERE'S A FEW OPTIONS ESCAPE LOVES.

GEM

Jewellery maker Louisa de Haas of Louisarose is holding a Mother & Child Beading Workshop & High Tea at her Berrima studio Thursday March 22 10am-1pm which sounds like a rather wonderful way to spend a morning with your little jewel louisaroseandco.com.au If you are looking for inspiration (to suggest to your kids!) for Mother's Day on Sunday May 13th Destination Southern Highlands southern-highlands.com.au has pulled together a great list of local restaurants and cafes who do High Tea. Check it out and make a date with/for your mum... the biggest decision you'll have then is whether to have a local sparkling or tea?

SKILFUL KIDS

Want your kids to learn invaluable life skills like fire lighting, working with hammers and nails, digging with a shovel, grinding wheat to make tea and damper? Mike Shepherd has been running back to basics classes at his Goulburn Yurt Farm for 25 years but alarmed at the lack of skills today's kids have, he recently switched his focus to teach the pastimes he learnt as a kid. 'I've taught nine year old girls and boys who have never seen, let alone ever picked up a hammer before,' says Mike 'but give them the chance and they soon get into the spirit making and digging and learning how to use tools from the tool box.' Mike's three hour classes for children aged 8-13 are held Sundays 2-5pm with a welcome and introduction from 1.30pm. Ten activities are taught in rotation and parental supervision is essential for health and safety. Parents are encouraged to get involved too. The course finishes with tea and the damper the kids have made to share. yurtfarmgoulburn@gmail.com Mike Shepherd 0413 043 444



100 KILOMETRE MITTAGONG TO KATOOMBA TREK

The Highlands has many innovative secondary schools offering life changing experiences to students. Few can boast the longevity of Chevalier College's Wilderness Studies. Running for more than 40 years, this elective outdoor education subject takes Year 9-12 students to wilderness areas to experience outdoor activities and foster personal growth, culminating in a 100 kilometre Mittagong to Katoomba trek for Year 12's each year. The route heads from High Range through the Wollondilly past the northern side of Yerranderie into the Kowmung River, up to Kanagra Walls, across the Coxs River and then to Narrow Neck at Katoomba, led by Matthew Heard, teacher. 'The kids are pushed hard mentally and physically on the trek, definitely outside their comfort zones but the benefits are endless in terms of increase in self-confidence, resilience, responsibility, risk management to name a few, and the realisation of how capable they are'. Of course, you don't have to be a Chev student. Sculptor David Ball has walked this route three times, once with a nephew in need. 'He was a bit of a lost teenager and he soon realised we had to work as a team to get there, but that if you put your mind to it you can achievement terrific things and cross any distance. It was a rite of passage and the transformation in that kid was extraordinary.' Good physical fitness and skills in navigation and bush skills, are required.

nationalparks.nsw.gov.au chevalier.nsw.edu.au



SOUL WARMING

Want to help your tween girl become a confident, resilient, active teenager? Sole Girls Southern Highland was formed by Canadian and Exeter mum Joelle Breault-Hood, mother of Ava, 9, and Georgia, 8 to help other tweens navigate the minefield of life. 'My drive was actually other mums looking for ways in which to help their girls with body image, health, nutrition, social media use and building self-esteem and self-confidence, although of course my own girls bring issues home.' An acronym for 'Support, Open-minded, Love and Enthusiasm' Sole Girl's 90 minute weekly meetings in Exeter and Bowral, have an indoor and outdoor component, such as discussion and playing in nature. Joelle, a trained outdoor and experiential educator wrote her PhD on the impact of outdoor education on teenage girls' body image and self-efficacy. 'As a mum, I want my girls to have the confidence to say no, the confidence to say yes, the ability to speak their voice honestly, and the ability to stand up for themselves.' solegirls.org jbreaulthood@gmail.com 📧

HIGHLANDS ESSENTIALS

A COMPENDIUM OF USEFUL CONTACTS THAT MAY COME
IN HANDY DURING YOUR STAY IN THE HIGHLANDS.

EMERGENCY:

Fire / Ambulance / Police 000

Bowral Fire Station 16 Merrigang St, Bowral, 4862 1446

Mittagong Fire Station 10 Bowral Road, Mittagong 4871 1002

Moss Vale Fire Station Elizabeth St, Moss Vale 4868 1288

Bowral Police Station 53 Wingecarribee Street, Bowral 4862 9299

Moss Vale Police Station New station expected to be operational in
May. Please contact Bowral station on 4862 9299

State Emergency Services (SES) 13 25 00

Emergency Bush Fire 000

HOSPITALS / HEALTH:

Bowral Public Hospital Mona Road, Bowral 4861 0200

Southern Highlands Private 99 Bowral Street, Bowral 4862 9400

Doctors:

Bowral Street Medical Practice 70 Bowral St, Bowral 4861 3183

Mittagong Healthcare Centre 58 Bowral Road, Mittagong 4872 3933

Southern Medical Centre 61 Elizabeth St, Moss Vale 4868 1500

Eastbrooke Medical Centre 4-10 Funston Street, Bowral 4862 7666

VET CLINICS:

Bowral Vet Hospital 78 Station Street, Bowral 4861 1444

Mittagong Vet Hospital 109 Main St, Mittagong 4872 2028

Southern Highlands Vet Centre 48 Berrima Rd, Moss Vale 4868 1310

AUSTRALIA POST:

260 Bong Bong St, Bowral 13 13 18

3/63 Main St, Mittagong 13 13 18

9/15 Clarence St, Moss Vale 13 13 18

TRANSPORT:

Southern Highlands Taxis Hire Cars & Coaches

21 Lyell St, Mittagong 4872 4800

05 Club Hire Cars & Mini Bus 205 Lackey Rd, Moss Vale 0400 505 113

Berrima Bus Lines 90 Old Bowral Rd, Mittagong 4871 3211

Highland Chauffeured Hire Cars 4872 3038 or 0400 921 239

Transport Info Line (Trains) 13 15 00

Railway Stations:

Bowral Station St

Mittagong Regents St

Moss Vale Argyle St

HELPFUL:

Electricity Emergency Endeavour Energy 13 10 03

Gas Emergency Jemena 13 19 09

AGL Emergency 24/7 on 131 245

Telstra Emergency 13 22 03

Wingecarribee Shire Council Open 8.30am – 4.30pm

(Monday to Friday) Civic Ctr, Elizabeth St, Moss Vale 4868 0888

Resource Recovery Centre Open 7.30am – 4.30pm

(Rubbish Disposal Centre) 117 Berrima Rd, Moss Vale 4868 0555

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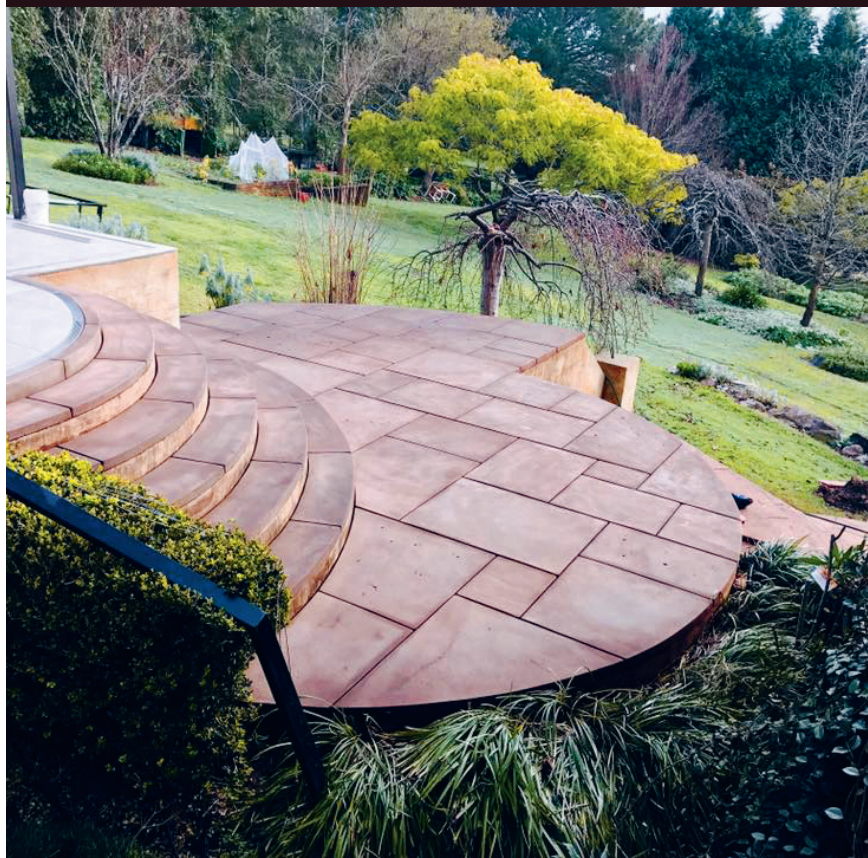


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For more information about the animals listed call Wingecarribee Animal Shelter on PH: 4868 1520.



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IN MY BACKYARD

LEO BERKELOUW IS THE CHARMING AND ERUDITE **PATRIARCH OF THE BERKELOUW BOOK DYNASTY**, WHICH WAS STARTED IN 1812 IN HOLLAND. THERE ARE NOW BERKELOUW BOOKSHOPS FROM QUEENSLAND TO SYDNEY TO **LEO'S SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS HOME, THE 200 ACRE BENDOOLEY ESTATE**. LEO TELLS ESCAPE OF THE INCREDIBLE BRAVERY OF HIS PARENTS, WHY HE STARTED SELLING BOOKS FROM 'A PADDOCK NEAR BERRIMA', AND HOW BOOKS, FOOD, WINE AND HOSPITALITY ARE SUCH A BLOCKBUSTER COMBINATION.

'I have books in my blood. I'm the fifth generation in our business. My boys Paul, Robert and David are the sixth. My great great grandfather Solomon started our business in Kipstraat, Rotterdam, where my family came from. He sold theology books to barge owners and skippers. He drowned one winter's day after slipping on the passerelle of a boat. He fell into the icy waters, weighed down by his bag of books.

So there is tragedy in our family. But also bravery. My father, Isidoor, was Jewish. He worked in the family business, buying and issuing catalogues of rare and collectable books. He was married to my mother, Francis, a Protestant Dutch English woman. As Jews, my father and his whole family were forced to wear the yellow star of David on their coats during the war. When my father was picked up by the authorities, they notified my mother he was to be deported on a train to Germany but she could go to the detention centre where he was being held to say goodbye. My mother was an extraordinary woman. She was attractive, blonde with blue eyes. She left my older brother, Henry, who was seven, at home with a friend and put me in the pram. I was the baby. About three. Under the pram mattress she put a pile of women's clothing. She pushed me in, and two women and a baby came out of that detention centre. My father was hidden in Amsterdam for the duration of the war. His brothers, sisters, mother and father were taken to Germany, where they were gassed like many other people. He lost his whole family to the Holocaust.



My father was a good man. He was strict but we were close. I had great admiration for him. He never talked about the past very much. Life as I grew up was to get on for the future. Within two weeks of the cessation of hostilities in Europe I was on a military aircraft to England, where I went to boarding school for two years. But in March 1948 we left for Australia. All our book stock had been destroyed during the battle of Rotterdam in 1940, and there were just too many terrible memories in Europe.

My parents arrived with Henry, me, our younger sister Francis, a few suitcases and 30 pounds. I was nine. We lived in Roseville in Sydney. I went to school, made friends, played soccer. It was a happy childhood. It was harder for my parents, who were very European. Initially my father went into the rag trade and hated it. Books that weren't anglophile didn't exist in shops here then. But there were other books ... French atlases, German natural history books with coloured plates. Books people who had fled from other parts of the world, like us, had brought with them. He started buying them from deceased estates and cataloguing them, and we developed into a mail order type of operation. We had a shop in King Street in Sydney.



IMAGES ELISE HASSEY



I went to university but dropped out when my father needed another pair of hands. Fuddy duddy old men coming into a bookshop wasn't the vision I had of what my life was going to be. But I persevered and I realised I had the capacity to buy well. It was instinctive to me. Books are a passion, but also a trade. My father always said, as a dealer if you start collecting you'll send yourself broke. Having said that, as a young man I started collecting The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, which is a Persian love tale. I now have more than 1300 editions.

Noelene, my late wife, and I bought Bendooley in 1975. We were renting in Sydney with our three little boys, and an uncle who lived in Moss Vale said, "There's a place you should look at." I had just returned from a buying trip to England and seen how the booksellers dealing in old and rare books like us had moved from central London and its exorbitant rents to these ancestral homes in the countryside. I knew that was the way we should take our business.

We loved it here. The land and the 1839 sandstone house with its wide verandahs. People thought we were mad, starting a book business in a paddock, but today we probably have nearly one million books, some very rare and collectable, sent to collectors and universities all over the world, others second hand, many new. We are probably the leading experts in rare and antiquarian books in Australia. Robert and David look after the Sydney stores, and Paul looks after the hospitality side here; Paul, Robert and David run the bookstores in their varied locations. In recent years Paul and I have pursued the evolution of what Bendooley Estate looks like today. A hospitality business that includes the Book Barn restaurant, cellar door, the weddings, and our six new accommodation cottages (see page 16) To do hospitality alongside bookselling is unusual and a great point of difference. People still somehow like to collect something.

We've been here 40 years, and I've been selling books since I was 18. I'm 80 now but I still find it exciting to come across a new collection. I've just taken delivery of some 17th century Isaac Newton first editions. Wonderful, wonderful books that came from the deceased estate of a retired university professor. He collected this stuff his whole life. It was his calling.'

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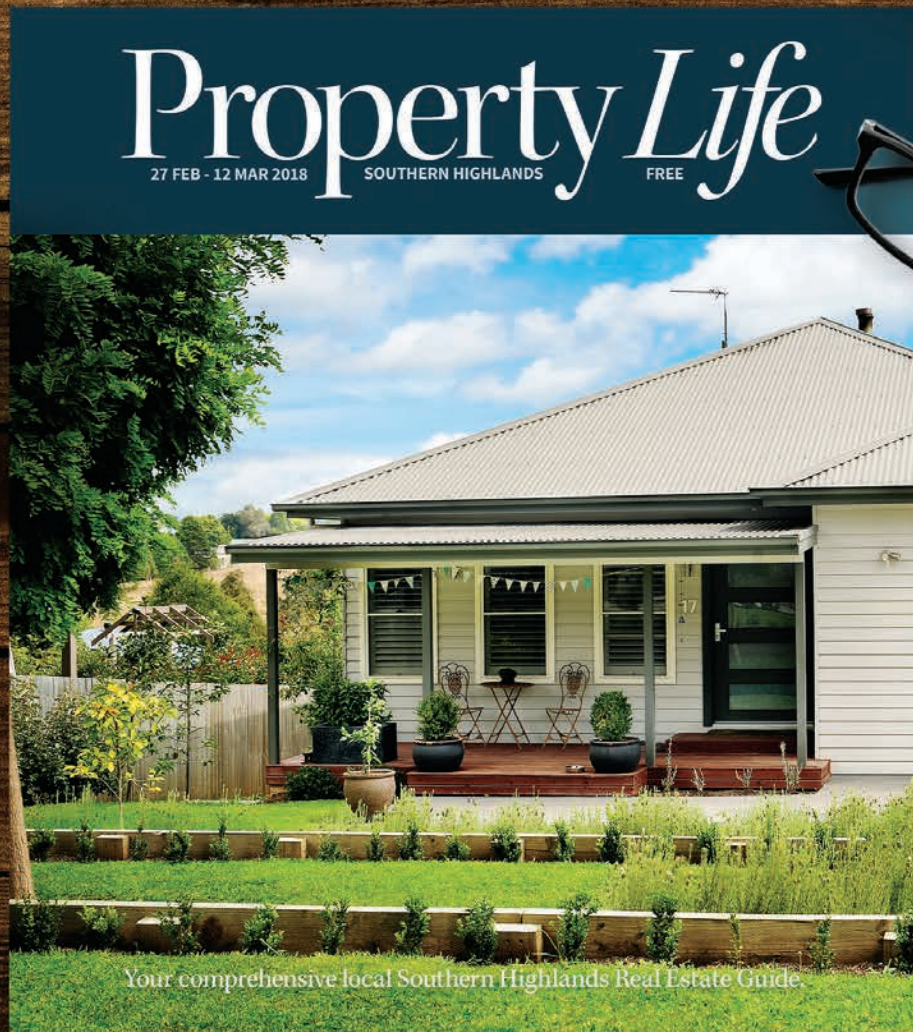
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