

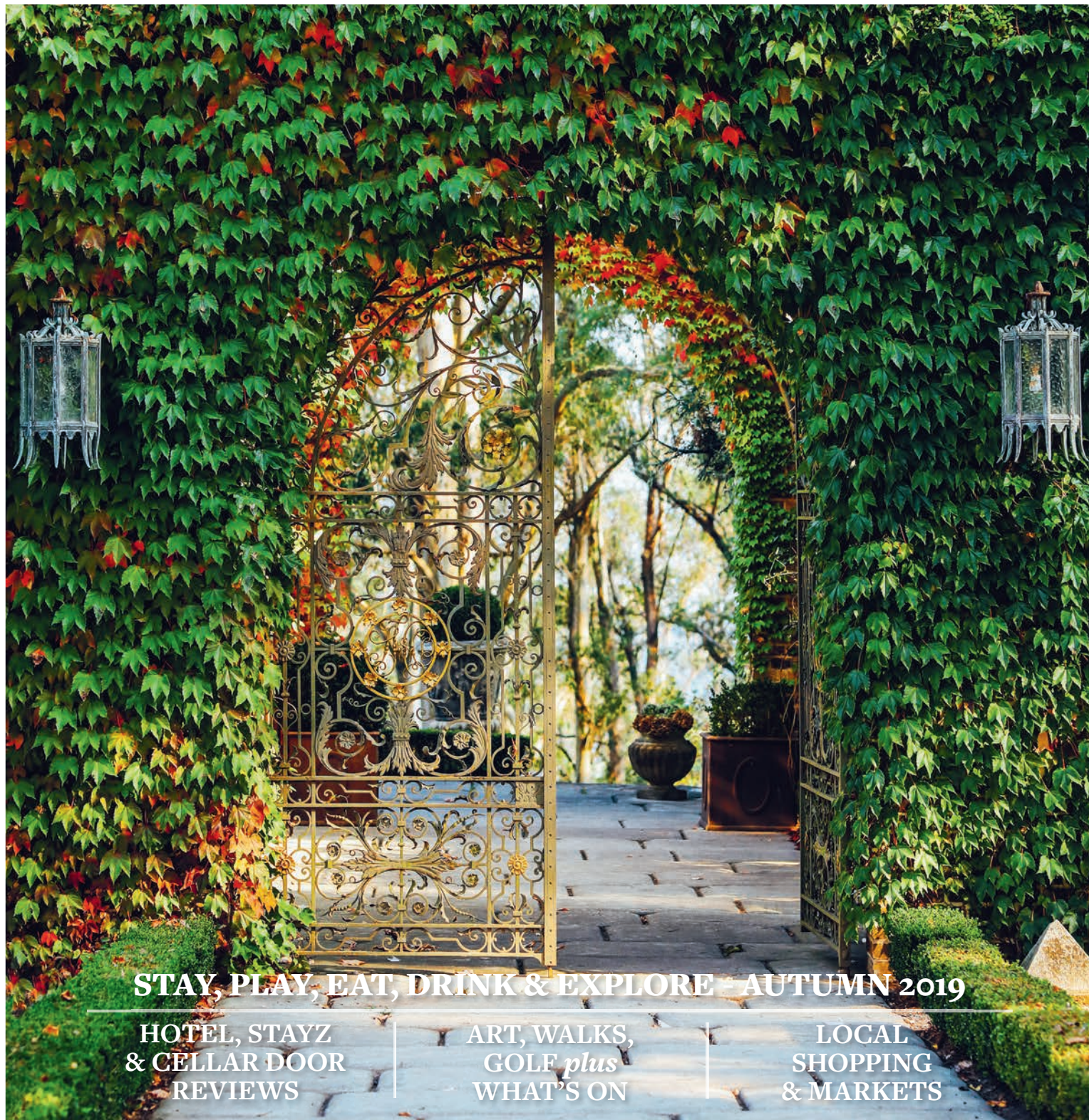
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Escape

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

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AUTUMN 2019



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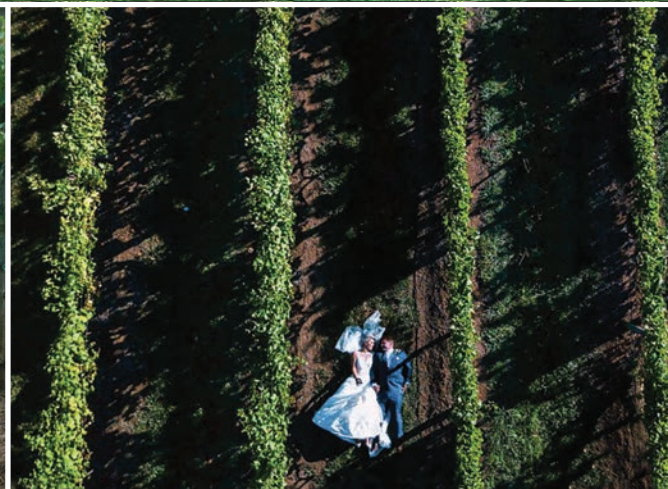
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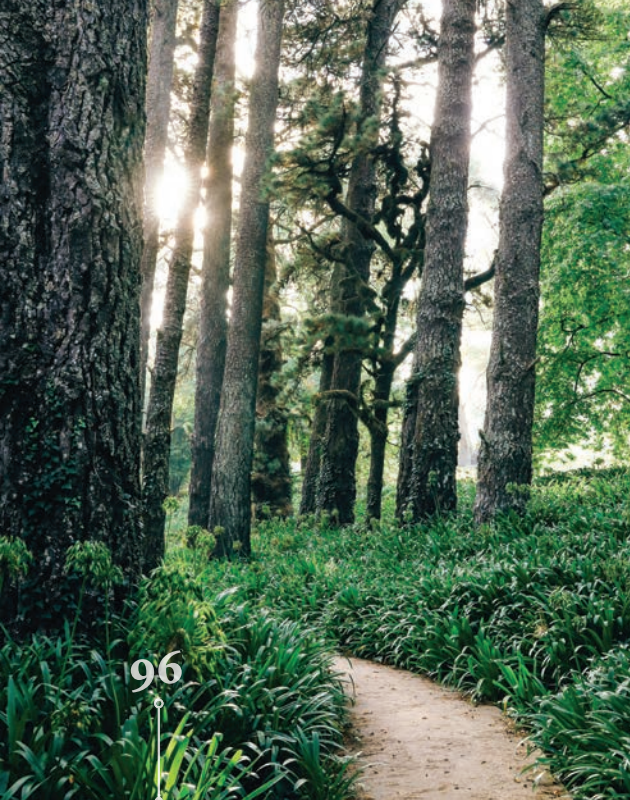
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CONTENTS



AUTUMN 2019

- 9** Welcome
- 10** Southern Highlands Map
- 12** Towns at a Glance
- 14** News/Movers & Shakers
- 20** What's On
- 26** Accommodation
Berrima Bakehouse Motel
& Exeter Farm Stay, Exeter
- 34** Shopping
Buy local
- 42** Relax & Recharge
Light a local candle
- 44** Food & Wine
Li-Sun Exotic Mushrooms
- 50** On Your Plate
Autumnal season restaurant roundup
- 52** Paddock to Plate
Growers Brillig Farm
- 56** Food Providence/Collaboration
- 60** Food & Wine
Joadja Estate Winery
- 62** Winery & distillery map
- 68** Out & About
On foot, bike and horse this autumn
- 72** Golf Guide
- 78** Highlands Wedding
A joyous Autumn celebration
- 95** Instagram Star
Meet home stylist Kim Oliver
- 100** Arts & Culture
What's on in our local galleries
- 101** Markets
- 102** Arts & Culture
- 103** Ask a Local
- 107** Kids What's On
Camps, workshops, clinics
- 108** Highlands Essentials
Numbers you may need
- 124** In My Backyard
Mark Bourne winemaker & local
- 130** Dream Highlands Home

AUTUMN FEATURES

- 84** Venues for your perfect Highlands wedding
- 91** The Southern Highlands Botanic Garden grows shoots
- 96** Visit the Southern Highlands beautiful Open Autumn gardens
- 98** Heritage & History in the Highlands



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COVER IMAGE - Elise Hassey

The Carriage House Country Manor
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Editor's welcome

Twenty years ago the creation of the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens was a pipe dream. Today, with more than \$25 million still to be raised to construct the gardens, and a visitor and education centre, it remains a long term vision. But as the members of the Friends of the Botanic Gardens tell us on page 91, it is a dream they are committed to for the enjoyment and wellbeing of all our community. With the gardens beginning to grow, and supportive locals such as artist John Olsen donating works to enhance them, read what events this determined and dedicated group of Highlanders has planned for autumn, and how you can get involved to help make the SHBG a reality. There's also lots of information inside about where to see the most beautiful gardens and vistas this season in the Highlands (including our beautiful cover shot by Elise Hassey taken at The Carriage House Country Manor, Bowral) and other ways to get around the region on foot, bike or horse. Speaking of getting around, autumn is wedding

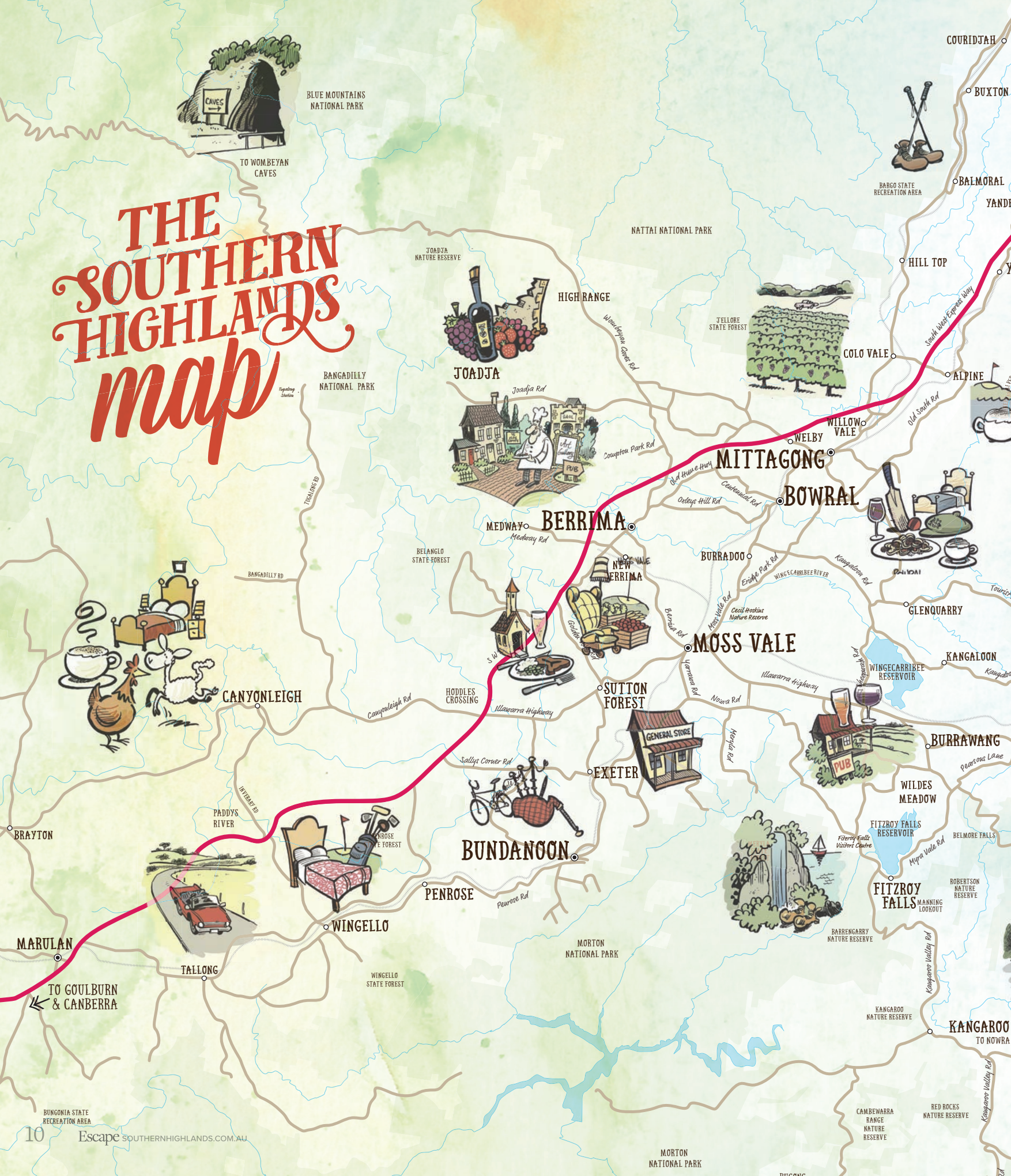
reccie time in the Highlands, when many soon to be married couples arrive to do a lightning tour of the many excellent venues available here. On page 84 we've done our own overview of venues, from those suited to a big full blown wedding celebration to others perfect for a more casual affair. Also in the pages of this issue, we stay at Berrima Bakehouse Motel, a place we no longer have to wonder about, and the lush Exeter Farm Stay. And we hear from winemaker Mark Bourne, actor John Waters and School of Life founder Annabelle Chauncy about what makes the Highlands so special to them.

And as always in Escape Southern Highlands, we take a look at the very clever people in our community growing, making, doing, teaching, entertaining, hosting, curating and working for our enjoyment and to showcase the delights of our backyard to visitors.

As autumn arrives we hope you find loads to fill your boots with in this issue. Enjoy your Escape Southern Highlands.

Alex

THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS map





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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://southern-highlands.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 Artemis Vineyard and Winery and Tertini Wines). 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 as well as gem Twisting Vintage for preloved designer and couture clothing and the award winning cafe, The Shaggy Cow. Stop off at Destination Southern Highlands Welcome Centre on the way into Mittagong and get informed about what's on locally and stock up on locally made produce. Don't forget to call in at boutique brewery Eden Brewery for some beer tastings.

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 although the bar and restaurant is closed presently and expected to reopen early 2019 following a fire. All functions and events still on.

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 Dos Hombres, Grand Bistro and Bistro Sociale which complement winning stalwarts such as Biota Dining, Onesta Cucina, Cafe Rosso, Eccetera Trattoria Pizzeria, The Royal, Gumnut Patisserie and a raft of other local favourite restaurants, cafes and pubs. Visitors and locals are drawn to Bowral's shop and galleries and 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, the Food and Wine Festival and Bong Bong Picnic Races. And of course there is a plethora of award winning vineyards nearby, such as Centennial Vineyards to visit for some tasting and buying.



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, Berrima General Store & Cafe and Feast at Berrima, plus excellent patisseries, cafes, local makers and artisans) as well as The Berrima Bakehouse Motel (a great place to stay) as well as Australia's oldest continuously licensed inn, the Surveyor General which also serves great pub grub. 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 with its fabulous Stephanie Alexander kitchen garden.

BURRAWANG

Quaint and historical, Burrawang is one of the Highland's most picture postcard villages. The newly renovated Burrawang Village Hotel (recently named Best Country Dining Venue - Country Southern in the Australian Hotels Association NSW awards 2018) 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. Don't miss the village's Easter markets, which are a highlight of the Highlands market calendar, attract a crowd of thousands and are a great day out.

BUNDANOON

Packed with old world charm, Bundanoon is a vibrant town with cafes, tearooms, antique dealers. Market days are held on the first and third Sundays, and bushwalking and mountain biking enthusiasts are drawn to the nearby Morton National Park. If you are overnighting or holidaying, stay and eat at the newly refurbished Bundanoon Guest House, or at tasty DeliLicious down the road. For body and soul, book a retreat at Quest for Life. Don't miss Brigadoon, the great Scottish celebration in April

ROBERTSON

The small, character filled town of Robertson combines a rolling pastoral setting with fabulous locally grown produce such as potatoes, truffles, pears, paddock raised eggs and award winning Pecora Dairy ewe's milk cheese. The newly changed-hands 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.

JOADJA

An area of farms and bushland on the periphery of the Southern Highlands, Joadja is steeped in history, once 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, has firmly put Joadja on the map. Don't miss one of Val's fascinating old township and distillery tours.

EXETER

The 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. 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 and across the road, Bowerbird Lane at Halcyon Cottage is great for homewares and gifts. The Exeter village markets are held on the first Saturday of each month in the grounds of the village oval.

SUTTON FOREST

It might be small but Sutton Forest has stuff going on. Sutton Forest General Store, under new management, sells locally grown fruit & veg, pizza bases and homemade curries, 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.

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 nice spot for refreshments as is the nearby Fitzroy Falls General Store.

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 terrific local lavender producer and cafe Belle Fleur Cottage, and the Cave Creek walking track too.

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. **19**

MOVERS & SHAKERS

SO MANY THINGS TO DO, SEE AND VISIT! WITH AUTUMN UPON US, IT'S TIME TO GET OUT AMONG THE TALENTED LOCAL PEOPLE PROVIDING A GREAT VARIETY OF INTERESTING EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES.



MAKING MAGIC

YOU CAN BE PRETTY SURE IF A HOUSE YOU HAVE BUILT WINS A COVETED HIA AUSTRALIAN HOUSE OF THE YEAR, YOU HAVE GOOD TASTE WHEN IT COMES TO DESIGN. Enter newcomers, multidisciplinary couple Zvoni Hodak and partner Phil Young, whose house near Canberra was HIA House of the Year in 2003. The clever creatives who moved to the Highlands in 2011 recently opened their first studio space, Hodak & Young, in Bowral, where Zvoni makes her striking silver and resin modernist jewellery pieces and Phil creates unique lighting, bowls, boards and other beautiful wood vessels with resin and timber he sources locally from farmers and arborists. When not turning out their own unique products for sale, Hodak & Young are busy sharing their knowledge in their workshops. 'Very few people get the opportunity to experience making things for themselves,' says Zvoni, who made jewellery in her 20s for fashion labels such as Saba before working in a business consultancy for two decades. She trained to become a silversmith several years ago. 'Apart from making our own pieces, one of the driving concepts of our studio is to give workshop participants an insight into what is involved in making a piece of jewellery, to get hands on and use the tools to

turn a blank piece of silver into something that they are proud to wear.' Phil, who was also formerly in the corporate world, made the life change after he was diagnosed with a serious illness in 2013, which took him years to recover from. 'He always loved working with wood and when he was ill he said he was never going to work another day doing something that didn't make him happy,' says Zvoni. 'And he hasn't. He is completely self taught through experimentation and developing techniques that work for him. For both of us becoming makers was the best move we ever made.'

Hodak and Young teach two full day introduction to silversmithing courses and an intensive five week course designed to teach skill sets and technique. They hope the studio will become a collaborative space for silversmiths where beginners and professionals alike can meet, share ideas, work side by side and simply enjoy the experience of creating. For details of Hodak & Young's workshops, see page 24. hodakyoung.com

Wild things

GREAT NEWS FOR OUR RESIDENT KOALA POPULATION, says local authority Joe Stammers, that former 3680 hectare Tugalong Station is to be established as a national park. Joe, an environmental projects offer with Wingecarribee Shire Council (who featured in our 2018 ESH spring issue), says the new park bordering the Wollondilly and Wingecarribee Rivers will become a vital link connecting the southern Blue Mountains wilderness with Morton National Park.

'Tugalong Station contains amazing habitat for koalas and other endangered wildlife, and is part of the regionally significant Great Western Wildlife Corridor,' says Joe. 'All credit for this announcement goes to the wonderful staff working at National Parks and the Office of Environment and Heritage.'

Responsible for the Southern Highlands Koala Conservation Project, Joe and his team spent two years collecting data in the Highlands to find we have a healthy population of more than 3000 of the native marsupials living here. And these koalas are among the main reasons for increasing conservation tourism in our region. 'We have many reports of sightings of koalas locally and it's a pretty special and memorable thing to spot a koala in its own Highlands habitat.'

For up to date Koala news and sightings, keep an eye on facebook. com/SouthernHighlandsKoalas. And check out page 107 to learn how you can get involved with your family in special Koalarama events this season.

In fine voice

When Ross 'Webby' Webb, retail operations manager with BDCU Alliance, isn't working, he's singing solo or with band Rusted Track (which includes his equally talented singer wife Sharon, owner of Hair Station in Moss Vale). And now he is getting a worldwide following. Webby's debut



single *You & Me* went to Number 1 on the UK/Europe country music HotDisc chart in November last year and was voted in the Top Ten of all 2018 releases. His second single, *Hello Someday*, was released in January on Australian and US radio. Currently in the Top 20 on the OzCountry Downunder chart, the single is due for release in Europe and the UK this month. Inspired by the likes of US country music singers Alan Jackson and Chris Stapleton and our own Keith Urban, Webby says his aim is to keep writing and to get more of a toehold in the Australian country music scene. 'I have just always loved singing and the way country music sounds I think,' he says. Not bad at all for a man from Moss Vale. Watch this space Nashville. Catch Ross and Rusted Track this autumn to see and hear what international country music lovers are discovering. And for other great music acts check out the great touring acts Bowral Bowling Club is bringing to the area. Ross Webb & Rusted Track: March 8, April 5, May 3 at Robertson Hotel; March 29, April 25 (Anzac Day) at Moss Vale Services Club; May 18 at Mittagong RSL rustedtrack.weebly.com bowralbowlingclub.com.au ►



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Amazing artists and makers

Here's a shout out to some of our gifted artists and makers doing their thing on the global, national and local stage. Starting with sculptural weaver and Robbo local Harriet Goodall, who travelled to Samoa to hold a weaving workshop recently with the Susu & Meli Project (a group sponsored by the International Council of Women to help survivors of domestic and sexual assault weave products, providing autonomous income to female victims). Harriet will teach Basketry: Circling Back at Sturt Winter School in Mittagong from July 8 to 12. harrietgoodall.com; sturt.nsw.edu.au

Meanwhile, Bowral High student Cameron Johnstone's HSC work Structure of pain, summation of peace is on show in the Art Gallery of NSW's ARTEXPRESS. Now in its 35th year, this exhibition showcases outstanding works of art created by NSW visual art students for the HSC. Cameron's work was one of 56 selected from that of 8770 students. Four other students, Alice Battcock and Stella Wilde from Frensham, Kelsey Walker from Bowral High and Jessica Deakin from Oxley College will also have their work exhibited in regional galleries around NSW. artgallery.nsw.gov.au

Dave Ball, winner of Sculpture by the Sea at Bondi last year, is currently showing his work at Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe. Closer to home, catch images of Wildes Meadow sculptor Dave at the Berrima exhibition A Butcher, A Baker, A Bunch of Makers at Berrima District Museum, Wednesdays to Sundays, 10am-4pm until July 31. davidball.com.au; thestorycentre.com.au

And, finally, Roberston dad and acclaimed international artist Ben Quilty presents his first major survey show in a decade, Quilty. Ben's work is on show at AGSA until June 2, at QGOMA from June 29 to October 13 and at AGNSW from November 9 to February 2, 2020. benquilty.com



RIDING HIGH

Another local dynamo, Zac Hulm, continues his quest to help put the Southern Highlands at the forefront of cycling. Zac is president of the Southern Highlands Cycle Club and organiser of the Rare Cancers Australia #ride4rare Mountain Bike Challenge at Twin Falls Cottages, the home of three times gold medallist cyclist Brad McGee on May 19. A timed charity fundraising ride, teams of four or two or solo riders will ride the 8 km loop track for three or five hours with the aim to complete the most circuits. Many school teams, including the MBT from Chevalier College and Tudor House, are set to compete. Zac is also manager of the Rare Cancers #ride4rareteam for the Bowral Classic in October, which will again include riders from Tudor House and Chevalier. Last October the event attracted more than 3000 riders to the Highlands. Also organiser of the inaugural P2P Cycle and Kosi Challenge from Parliament House to Mount Kosciusko, Zac, himself a survivor of a rare childhood cancer, says cycling in the Highlands is on a par to anywhere in Australia. 'It is certainly seen as one of the best cycling destinations in the country and I'm pretty sure champions Brad and Caleb Ewan would agree with that'. southernhighlandsccl.com.au

For more information go to rarecancersaustralia.com.au, and check out Zac's favourite off road and on cycle Highlands routes on page 68.





DYNAMIC DRY RUN

We don't often relate skiing to the Highlands (although it can feel quite arctic here during winter). So full kudos and credit to farmer, award winning rural producer and Oxley College mum of four Katrina Sparke for co-ordinating with NSW Biathlon to bring dryland training sessions to the Highlands. She did this following interest from many junior cross country skiers from Oxley, Tudor House and Gib Gate schools. The first Southern Highlands Biathlon Development Camp was led recently by Olympic coach Cameron Morton and daughter Darcie, Australian Women's Sprint Champion who recently returned from representing Australia in the Biathlon and Cross Country World Junior Championships.

The camp was held at Bong Bong Racecourse in Bowral and Katrina's family's Redleaf Farm at Fitzroy Falls. And Katrina hopes there will be many more, given the level of interest she has received. "Training with the Olympic coach and his daughter, who is such a wonderful role model for the girls and boys taking part, is a terrific opportunity and gives kids who haven't done skiing the opportunity to learn a sport they otherwise would not have access to. Cross country is one of the most cardiovascular sports, while accurate target shooting requires a mindfulness over both body and brain that can really help kids in so many ways."

The Biathlon is a winter Olympic sport that involves cross country skiing and target rifle shooting, but dry training takes place on roller skis with lasers for shooting. The recent camp will be followed by regular training sessions in the Southern Highlands. (Read about another of Katrina's and Redleaf Farm's community initiatives on page 56.) nswbiathlon.com.au; katrina@redleaf-farm.com 📧



babilonia

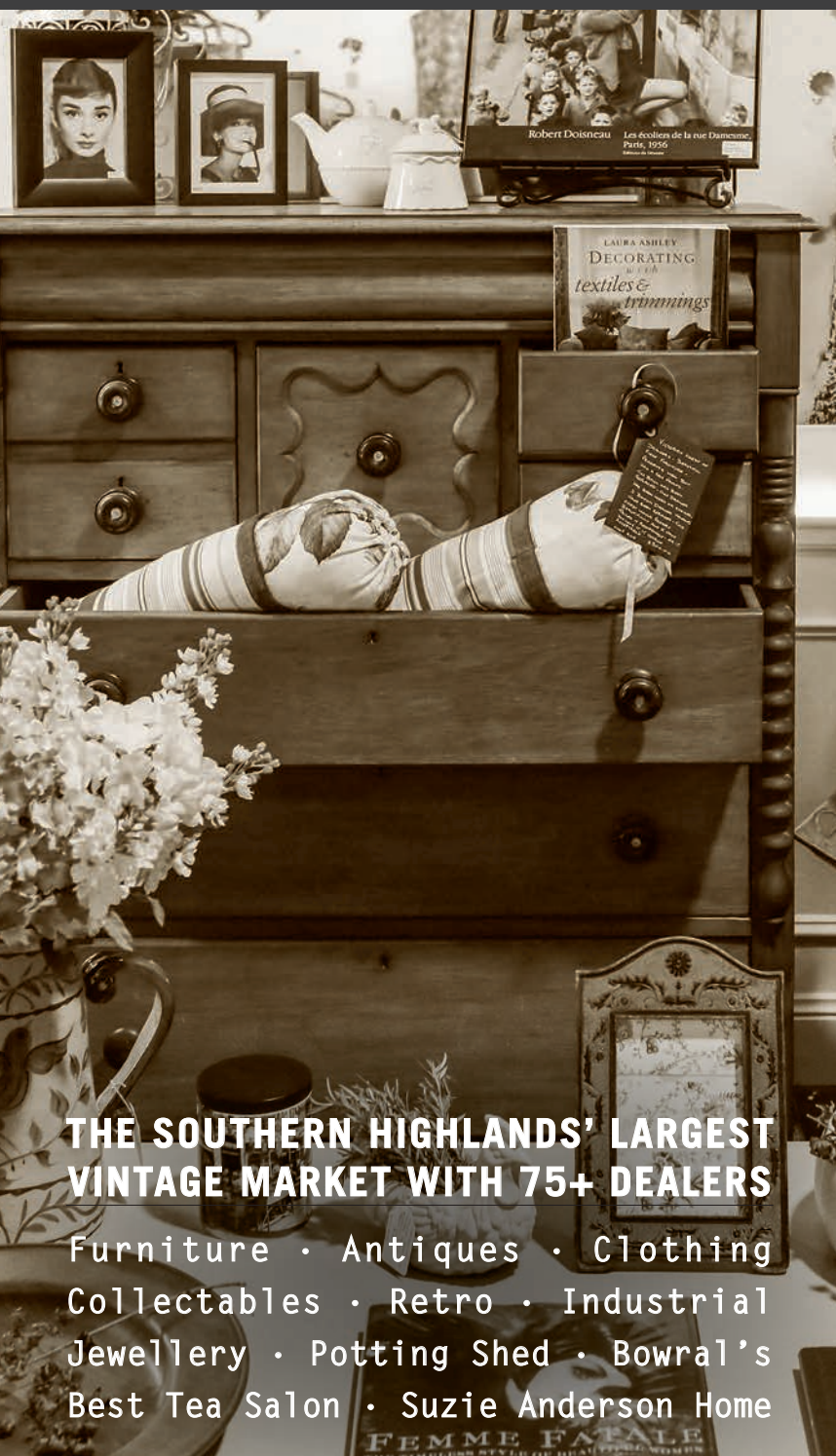
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Local, Sydney and interstate dealers offering a wide selection of furniture, jewellery, silver, porcelain, linen, lamps, books and many other interesting collectables. Refreshments available all weekend. Admission \$10.00 Accompanying children free.

Saturday 4th May 2019, 9am-5pm

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bowral autumn music festival.

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WHAT'S ON Autumn

AUTUMN IS A FUN TIME IN THE HIGHLANDS, FULL OF THINGS TO DO, PLACES TO STAY AND BEAUTIFUL NATURE. WE'VE CHERRYPICKED JUST A FEW EVENTS WE THINK YOU'LL LOVE BUT WITH SO MUCH TO CHOOSE FROM, KEEP A LOOK OUT FOR OUR UPDATES @ESCAPESOUTHERNHIGHLANDS AND CHECK OUT SOUTHERN-HIGHLANDS.COM.AU/EVENTS/WHAT'S_ON

MAR



BERRIMA BUNCH

The Highlands is alive with history and heritage; you only need to look at the colonial architecture everywhere to see it. If you are a history buff, read our story on page 98 for heritage events on this autumn and add a trip to A Butcher, a Baker and a Bunch of Makers to the must do list. The first exhibition in the Highlands' new digital gallery at the fascinating Berrima District Museum tells the more recent stories of some of our finest local artists. Hear and see their stories on film, and marvel at their works and spend time looking through the other historical displays and fascinating photographs in the museum. **Wednesdays-Sundays, 10am-4pm, until July 31. berrimadistricthistoricalsociety.org.au**



LIVE AND LAUGHING

We have some great active companies producing theatre in the Highlands but hats off to Clare Macarthur-Stanham and CMS Productions for bringing some stellar touring productions such as *Kaput!*, *Good with Maps* and *Onstage Dating* to our stages recently. CMS Productions' next show is the Ensemble Theatre Sydney's acclaimed production *Two* by Jim Cartwright and directed by Mark Kilmurry. Set in a local pub, this comedy introduces a misfit crowd of 14 characters played by two actors, husband and wife Kate Raison and Brian Meegan, who also play a married couple in some of *Two's* scenes. Part of a national tour, there are only four performances in the Highlands at the Mittagong Playhouse, so if you love excellent live theatre, grab your tickets now. **March 28 & 29, 7.30pm; March 30, 2.30pm & 7.30pm. Tickets from cmsproductions.com.au**



LET THERE BE MUSIC

*Autumn in the Highlands lends itself to beautiful music and the Southern Highlands Symphony Orchestra presents the first of its series this month featuring acclaimed pianist John Martin performing Piano Concerto No 2 written by fellow local artist and composer Ann Carr-Boyd AM. Celebrated as a sensitive and elegant performer, John recently made a celluloid cameo debut as the department store pianist in Bruce Beresford's *Ladies in Black* but is no stranger to glamour having played with many acclaimed international musicians and actors over the years. A composer himself of close to 40 works, his concert with the SHSO will include Verdi's *Overture to Nabucco* and Elgar's *Enigma Variations*. **March 23, 7.30pm & March 24, 2.30pm, Bowral Memorial Hall. Tickets from trybooking.com, Destination Southern Highlands in Mittagong and Powerpoint Music in Bowral. shso.org.au***

PLAY ON

THE BOWRAL MUSIC FESTIVAL GOES INTO FULL SWING AGAIN THIS SEASON WITH NINE CONCERTS OVER THREE DAYS, INCLUDING A WORLD PREMIERE PIECE COMPOSED BY ALICE CHANCE ESPECIALLY FOR THE FESTIVAL AND PERFORMED BY THE ENSEMBLE IN RESIDENCE, THE ACACIA QUARTET. UNDER THE ARTISTIC DIRECTION OF MYEE CLOHESSY, A FRENTHAM OLD GIRL AND PART OF ACACIA, THIS YEAR'S PROGRAM ALSO INCLUDES PERFORMANCES BY VIRTUOSO PIANIST STEFAN CASSOMENOS, SOLOISTS FROM THE AUSTRALIAN ROMANTIC AND CLASSICAL ORCHESTRA, ORGANIST DAVID DRURY AND THE AUSTRALIAN BAROQUE BRASS, AND YOUNG RECITALISTS THE GEIST STRING QUARTET, MARCUS MICHELSEN AND TITUS GRENYER. A SPECIAL CHILDREN'S CONCERT WILL FEATURE DA VINCI'S APPRENTICE IN AN IMAGINATIVE PERFORMANCE FEATURING WEIRD AND WONDERFUL INSTRUMENTS OF 16TH CENTURY ITALY. **MARCH 29-31, ST JUDE CHURCH, BOWRAL. TICKETS AVAILABLE ONLINE FROM BOWRALAUTUMNMUSICFESTIVAL.COM.AU, OR DESTINATION SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS IN MITTAGONG AND POWERPOINT MUSIC IN BOWRAL. CHECK BOWRALAUTUMNMUSICFESTIVAL.COM.AU FOR CONCERT TIMES**



IT'S SHOWTIME!

Join the country festivities for the 136th Robertson Show, one of the best shows on the NSW agricultural show calendar. This year's fun and festivities include lots of much loved activities for all the family, including horse events, cattle judging, chook washing (yes, it's a thing), miniature goat displays, pet shows, farmyard dog jumping, hay stacking, the Spud Olympics and Potato Races (paying homage to Robertson's famous locally grown spuds), and the Demolition Derby. In the pavilions you'll find the local green thumbs, makers and cooks battling for the Best of Show ribbons. With a sideshow alley, lots of food and a fireworks finale, the Robbo show is a long running local gem. Get along and support and experience Highlands life. **March 8, 7am-3pm, adults \$6, concession \$5, children over 10 \$4, children under 10 free. March 9, 7am-9pm (until fireworks finale), adults \$15, concession \$10, children over 10 \$5, children under 10 free. robertsonshow.org.au**

STEP RIGHT UP!

The fun continues the following week at the Moss Vale Show where the schedule is packed with events in the main arena. The show jumping and wood chopping are always huge crowd pullers, while over in the stalls and pavilions there are the heavily contested art exhibitions, home baking, homegrown vegies, flowers and handmade crafts. There are beef cattle, poultry and alpaca displays, as well as dog obedience displays, racing pigs, teddy bears picnic, fireworks, a Moss Vale's Got Talent competition and the ever popular wife carrying competition. Hmmm. If you love cars, don't miss RevHead Sunday. Big sideshow alley is ever popular with the kids and there's lots of other entertainment, stalls, food and drink. March 17-19, from 9am. **Adults \$15, concession \$9, children under 16 \$6, children under school age free, family pass (2 adults & 2 children) \$35. mossvaleshow.com**

RELEASE THE INNER WRITER

Those looking to tease out that book hiding within need to sign up for Springfield Creative Writing Retreat in Avoca. The French inspired property (formerly owned by fashion designer Colette Dinnigan) has morphed into a glamorous retreat and will host its inaugural event with writers of international standing. First up is American writer Karen Joy Fowler (shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize in 2014 for *We Are All Completely Besides Ourselves*). Other writers leading the workshop will include Nike Salway, lecturer in creative writing and author of several books including *Dying in the First Person*. The farm retreat includes three hour sessions daily with these writers and one on one sessions. Designer accommodation is also available on site and locally sourced and prepared meals are included. Participants can also attend on a daily basis. **March 16-23. lifeatspringfield.com.au ►**



Photo: Meg Nurse

Retford Park

Be enchanted by the magnificent gardens surrounding the grand Victorian Italianate homestead formerly owned by Mr James Fairfax AC. Discover the exquisite swimming pool and pavilion nestled amongst a patchwork of hedge gardens where sculptures demand centre stage. These stunning gardens open on the first weekend of each month* (the house will also be open on the May weekend – bookings essential). The gardens open from 10am to 4pm. Refreshments available. See website for Calendar of Events.

*If the first of the month falls on a Sunday it is that weekend that the gardens are open.



NATIONAL TRUST

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www.nationaltrust.org.au/places/retford-park/

Harper's Mansion

CELEBRATE YOUR CONVICT ANCESTRY

Heritage Festival Events 13 April to 19 May. See website for details.

Colonial house museum, shop, historical displays. Hedge maze & garden. Wedding & event venue for hire. Open 10.30am – 4.00pm weekends, public holidays & by arrangement. Old Hume Highway, Berrima.

www.harpersmansion.com.au





APR

OCH AYE THE NOO!

BRIGADOON, THE BUNDANOON HIGHLANDS GATHERING, IS BACK FOR ANOTHER YEAR TO CELEBRATE ALL THINGS SCOTTISH. READ ALL ABOUT IT ON PAGE 98, AND IF YOU LIKE TARTAN, SHORTBREAD, BAGPIPES, SCOTTISH DANCING, NOISE, COLOUR, FUN AND LOTS OF MEN IN KILTS, GET ALONG TO BUNDANOON OVAL AND HAVE A WHOOP OF A TIME. OR, AS THE HAGGIS LOVING SCOTTISH POET RABBIE BURNS SAID, 'FAIR FA YER HONEST SONSIE FACE.' **APRIL 6. BRIGADOON.ORG.AU**

DESERT TRADITIONS DEMONSTRATED

Sturt is holding the exhibition Punu, Living Wood with Maruku Arts from the Northern Territories, which is owned and operated by Anangu, Aboriginal peoples from the Western and Central deserts of Australia. To coincide with this event curated by Slavica Zivkovic and residencies by senior indigenous artists Billy and Lulu Cooley, join in for a series of free public interactive demonstrations and talks. Each will feature the process involved in carving music sticks and Punu (traditional wood burning designs). See page 102 for more details and further exhibitions. April 10 & April 11, 11am-12.30pm & 1.45-3pm; April 13, 10.30-11.30am; April 14, 11am-12pm (exhibition opening) & 1-2.30pm (interactive demonstration). sturt.nsw.edu.au

EASTER FIESTA

Join the thousands flocking to the Burrawang Easter Markets this Easter Saturday and see why the annual market has become the biggest and most visited in the Highlands. You'll find more than 160 stalls selling everything from food, furniture, clothes, handmade goods and local produce from growers, makers and artisans all situated along the main drag of Hoddle Street. Park and ride or stroll to where the action is and enjoy a truly Highlands experience. If a crowd of 8000 sounds too much, check out our local Markets Guide on page 101 for a gentler, more leisurely version. **April 20, 8am-3pm. burrawangeastermarket.com**



ALL THE LEAVES ARE BROWN (& RED & GOLD)

Another big autumn weekend in the Highlands with the annual Autumn Garden Weekend & Plant Fair in aid of the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens. Five beautiful private gardens will be open to the public for one weekend only, and a huge plant fair at the site of the emerging Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens. Turn to pages 91-93 and 96-97 for a full rundown on the progress of the Southern Highlands Botanic Garden dream, and Open Gardens in the Highlands this autumn. **April 27 & 28, 9am-4pm, \$10 per garden or \$35 for five. Entry to Plant Fair \$10. shbg.com.au**

GENTLE GIANTS

GET ALONG TO THE NATIONAL SHIRE AND SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS HEAVY HORSE SHOW AND SEE THESE BEAUTIFUL GENTLE PERCHERONS, CLYDESDALES AND SHIRE HORSES AND RIDERS GOING THROUGH THEIR SHOW CLASS PACES AND IN ACTION. **MOSS VALE SHOWGROUND MARCH 30 & 31 SHIREHORSE.COM.AU**



Walkies & Runnies

James Fairfax who left his SH property Retford Park to the nation on his death in 2017 was a dog lover. Selene above, painted by local artist Margaret Mapperson one of his beloved pooches still lives at the now very special National Trust property, and now you can take your four legged best friends on this terrific Dogs Day Outing for man/woman/child and dog. Organised by Wingecarribee Animal Shelter (FOWAS), the day will include stalls with doggy merchandise, dog competitions, obedience demonstrations from Southern Highlands Kennel and Obedience Club, and tours of the property, with 25% of profit from the day to be donated to FOWAS. All dogs to be on lead at all times, vaccinated, socialised and non aggressive. April 28, 10am-3pm. nationaltrust.org.au/a-dogs-day-out

MAY

HIGHLANDS HEIRLOOMS

Back bigger and better, the Southern Highlands Antiques & Collectables Fair moves to a new venue this year in the hall of Chevalier College in Bowral. More than 24 antique and collectable dealers from all over NSW and Victoria will exhibit and sell their antique treasures. As a fundraiser for the Bowral District Hospital Auxiliary, which purchases much needed medical equipment for our district hospital, the good people of the charity will be selling morning and afternoon teas and light lunches. All visitors have the chance to win the lucky door prize. **May 4, 9am-4pm, May 5, 10am-4pm. Call Mick Dalton on 0428 446 534 for more information.**

Mercury Magic

Great timing from Chevalier College, which continues its strong tradition of producing award winning high school productions, with the staging of rock musical We Will Rock You. Director and drama teacher Kate Price and her cast of young talents will perform the musical, written by Queen and Ben Elton, dedicated to the late great Freddie Mercury's life and music in Chevalier's new Performing Arts Centre, which opened in January. And well played to Oxley College, Bowral which recently won four awards in the Canberra Area Theatre Awards for productions 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee & Where in the World is Frank Sparrow. Chevalier College's We Will Rock You performances May 29-June 1 **Performances May 29-June 1 at 7pm; matinee June 1 at 2pm.**
For more information and bookings go to chevalier.nsw.edu.au



WILLOW THWACK

*If you love cricket don't miss the Burrawang Cricketers Fair which will include talks and displays on everything cricket including ceramics, caps, bats, balls and historical memorabilia. Held at the Burrawang School of Arts in the pretty village, the fair is kicked off with an eight course degustation dinner at nearby Burrawang General Store the evening before. Information hello@52shepherdstreet.com.au
Dinner Saturday May 18 Cricketing Fair Sunday May 18 10am*

What's On...

For all the latest information for 'What's On' in the beautiful Southern Highlands, please go to the Destination Southern Highlands website.
www.southern-highlands.com.au



Red Cow Farm, Sutton Forest

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TALKS, TOURS, OPEN DAYS, WORKSHOPS, FORUMS, CLASSES, EXPERIENCES, RETREATS, NEW THINGS TO TRY

BEE HAPPY

Bees are the biz at the moment and the Highlands are abuzz this season with classes and workshops. Award winning Bowral apiarist Bulwarra Bees is offering garden tours to take honey lovers behind the scenes of their very successful hives and see their winged workers at work. Learn which plants will attract bees to your garden, which provide the best levels of pollen and nectar, and which are bee favourites, and observe the habits of honey bees. Book for garden tours from March to October. Adults \$8, pensioners and children under 12 \$5. Over at Five Acre Lot in Mittagong, owner Jane Cush is offering a Basic Beekeeping workshop to take you through the steps to set up, manage and harvest from a hive. Both traditional and Flow Hive methods will be demonstrated. All equipment provided and a light lunch served at the end of the workshop, using honey of course. March 30, 10am-1pm, \$150pp. bulwarrabees.com.au; fiveacrelot.com.au



SAY CHEESE

LEARN TO MAKE YOUR OWN CHEESES WITH FOODIE AND ARTISAN CHEESE MAKER LUCY NIAS IN THESE HANDS ON CLASSES IN THE KITCHEN OF HER PERMACULTURE FARM IN THE HIGHLANDS. ALL EQUIPMENT, INGREDIENTS AND A YUMMY HOMEGROWN, HOMEMADE LUNCH IS PROVIDED, BUT BRING ALONG AN ESKY OR LARGE WATERPROOF BOX TO TAKE HOME YOUR CHEESES. CLASSES RUN FROM 10AM TO 4PM. MARCH 9, FETA, YOGHURT, FROMAGE FRAIS. APRIL 13, CAMEMBERT, RICOTTA, CULTURED BUTTER. MAY 18, HALLOUMI, RICOTTA, MASCARPONE. BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL. \$150PP. **CONTACT LUCYNIAS@HOTMAIL.COM**

THE ART OF UPCYCLING

Got a tired piece of furniture or even an old door that needs a bit of rejazzing? Pete of Pete's Shed fame is holding paint workshops at his charming Bowral studio, St Elio, to teach all the tricks and techniques you need to know. Learn how to paint with Canterbury Blue furniture chalk paint, and how to compliment your chalk painting efforts with techniques such as colour distressing, dry brushing, stencilling and colour washing. March 9 & April 13, Painting with chalk; March 23 & April 27, Special finishes. 9-11.30am, \$99pp. petessedpaint.com

IN YOUR ELEMENT

Join Hodak & Young makers (see our story on page 14) for autumn workshops. Silversmith Zvoni will take you step by step through the process of creating a band in her Bowral workshop, Make a Sterling Silver Ring. You will leave with several. In the Sterling Silver Bookmark Workshop, learn how to make a lovely useful bookmark that will stay with you, or a loved one, forever. Silver rings, April 13, 9.30am-4pm, \$265pp. Silver bookmark, March 9 & May 11, 10am-2pm, \$165pp. hodakyoung.com



HEALING HEART

Huge kudos and respect to local and highly respected healer Petrea King who recently took her expertise on the central west NSW road to help our struggling rural neighbours with the ongoing drought and the huge financial, emotional and physical burdens it brings. The founder of Quest for Life at Bundanoon, which provides practical advice and strategies for people to cope with hardship in their lives, Petrea is running another full program of residential programs there over autumn. These include Healing Your Life for people suffering grief, depression, loss and anxiety, and Quest for Life for people living with cancer, autoimmune disease, chronic pain and chronic illness. The centre also offers acclaimed program Moving Beyond Trauma for people living with post traumatic stress disorder, and is introducing a new program midyear called Reclaiming Your Brain: ageing joyfully and skilfully. Healing Your Life, March 18-22, April 8-12, May 6-10 and 20-24. Quest for Life, April 29-May 3. questforlife.com.au

BYE BYE BABY

When your little one is about to start preschool, it's a big milestone with big decisions to make. Check out Gib Gate's Preschool Open Day at the purpose built preschool facility, which contains light filled indoor spaces and an inspiring outdoor classroom, all set within the Mittagong school's beautiful grounds. Couple this with a diverse program designed to give your preschooler the best start in life, and a pretty fabulous looking green and purple tennis court in school colours. Open Day school tours are on May 11, 11am-1pm. gibgate.nsw.edu.au

TEEN CARE

Being the parent of a teenager can be hard work. Which is why the Anthroposophic Home Care workshop for parents of teenagers is offering a little support and wisdom to those feeling just a little embattled, and to introduce parents to some of the tasks and quests of teenagers. Led by anthroposophical nurturer (anthroposophy is an alternative practice developed by Rudolf Steiner) Lyn Clifton, the day will also identify and make some healing supports such as salves, lotions and oils to aid our kids and us, all while being nourished with useful teas and snacks. April 14, 9.30am-2pm, \$100pp if you book before March 25. Ink, Brush & Willow Studio, Shop 4, The SHAC, Robertson. **Contact penny@ruralartisanliving.com for more information**



GET THE PICTURE

Create a piece of art at this mixed media portrait art workshop with Tracey Miller. No experience needed but BYO reference photo (this can be a photo of yourself) and you'll use collage, paint, pastel and graphite to create your image. Bring materials (Tracey provides information when you book) and wear old clothes and an apron. BYO lunch. April 27, 10am-4pm, BDAS Bowral, \$130pp. traceymiller.com.au

SPAIN TO HIGHLANDS

Looking to bring some passion, colour and emotion to your life? Try flamenco dance. This dance originates from the southern regions of Spain and is all about expressing yourself through movement and music. Marisol Santos is an acclaimed flamenco dancer and teacher who also teaches Spanish and percussion (the castanets and cajon). And runs flamenco, Spanish and music classes for adult and beginners in her Moss Vale studio. flamencosolymar.com

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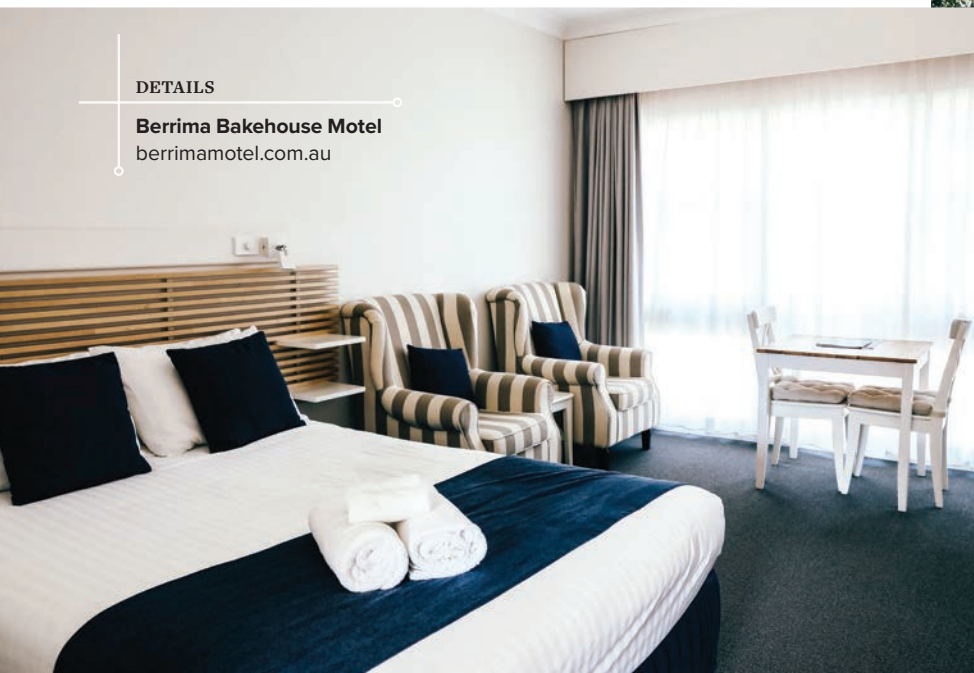
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DETAILS

Berrima Bakehouse Motel
berrimamotel.com.au



TAKE A BAKEHOUSE BREAK

A NIGHT IN THE SMARTLY UPDATED BERRIMA BAKEHOUSE MOTEL SOLVED A DECADE LONG MYSTERY VERY PLEASANTLY.

Words **Alex Speed** Images **Elise Hassey**

Many times over the years I've driven past the Berrima Bakehouse Motel and wondered. Often ferrying carloads of muddy children and dogs home to Moss Vale, still wet from swims in Berrima's lovely part of the Wingecarribee River, I've speculated what the smart two storey brick building neatly tucked away next to the Old Hume Highway might be like.

The motel, which sits opposite fellow village stalwarts the Surveyor General Inn and the Magpie Cafe, always looks so calm and tidy and cared for. Unlike the interior of my car on these trips home, it gives off a kind of serenity and an appealing sense of comfort in its own skin.

I get this feeling again recently. After years of driving by, I am here to check in for a night's stay, and I've been looking forward to it for days. I've always had a thing for a hotel room you can drive right up to. It's the nostalgia of long hot car trips through central NSW made during my childhood, and the heaven of arriving at a faraway establishment with air conditioning. And a swimming pool. And, happy days, Berrima Bakehouse Motel has both.

A child of the 1970s like me, it was originally built adjacent to the village's original bakehouse, which itself dated back to the 1800s. Owned by Country Inn Motels, which also owns and operates the Bundanoon Country Inn, there is nothing 1970s about the Berrima Bakehouse Motel today. In fact, first impressions suggest it is modern and, like a freshly baked loaf, comforting.



The 19 rooms offer various bedding configurations to suit all manner of guests. You'll find them breaking their journey on the way to Melbourne or further afield, or attending a wedding up the road at Bendooley Estate, The Loch or even Peppers in nearby Sutton Forest and making a weekend of it. And then there are the corporate types here for a conference and some good old fashioned team building.

The Bakehouse underwent a major refurbishment 18 months ago and the result is pleasantly upmarket with a Scandinavian design influence. Rooms are spotless and spacious, uncluttered and pleasing. Mine is on the second storey with a view to the swimming pool and the slow moving Wingecarribee beyond, with towering European trees planted by early settlers dotting the garden. A colour theme of white and navy bedding is fresh and contemporary, as is the on trend birch ply slatted bedhead, and a neat table and chair configuration with comfy armchair, perfect for a laptop and some relaxed reading.



Motel room staples such as an ironing board, iron and coat hangers are cleverly incorporated as design features on the far wall, and there is a huge paddle head in the shower. The bathroom also features complimentary toiletries such as make remover, perfect for wedding guests returning from late night celebrations. There is a breakfast bar with the usual tea bags and mini packets of bickies, but there's also an espresso machine with pods and latte glasses, and fresh milk and complimentary bottles of water in the fridge. All thoughtful and welcome touches.

Armed with a decent coffee, I happily browse the hotel room's information pack. Berrima was built on inns and passing trade, I learn. In the 1830s, Surveyor General Thomas Mitchell sought out a site where the Wingecarribee River could be spanned by a bridge for settlers pushing out from Sydney to Goulburn, Yass and beyond. His new road became known as the Hume Highway and linked Sydney with the southern settlements, and later on Melbourne. A day's journey by horseback or coach was usually about 16km and, as a result of travellers needing to stop overnight and feed and rest their horses, coaching inns began to spring up along the road.

Many of Berrima's oldest buildings were built by convict labour so a courthouse was needed, and as Berrima became a major stopover between Campbelltown and Goulburn, larger inns providing better facilities and accommodation were built. By 1834 there were three inns operating in Berrima and this increased to six by the early 1840s, among them the Surveyor General, believed to be the longest continually licensed inn in Australia.

The railway came to Bowral and Moss Vale in 1867 but bypassed Berrima, leading to the gradual demise of the coaching inns as people increasingly chose to travel by rail. Today Berrima is one of Australia's most historic villages, and in the 1960s the National Heritage Council declared the entire village an historic precinct.

If you love history and architecture like I do, the Berrima Bakehouse is a perfectly located staging post for exploration. In the evening I cross the now quiet Hume Highway for the colonial Georgian Surveyor General. Fellow motel guests and locals mingle in the busy sandstone pub with its convict laid stones all around. I eat from the Bushranger Bistro and enjoy a grilled burger and a glass of local pinot noir in the beer garden. Later, sleep comes easily as my room's welcome air conditioning cools dreams of convicts reportedly chained in the Surveyor General's cellar and bushrangers who frequented these parts.

Berrima Bakehouse manager Peter Fussell says he loves the varied guests who frequent the motel, which received a Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence in 2018.

'Our favourite group last year was the Mustang Enthusiast Club from Newcastle. They really brought the motel's car park alive,' says Peter. 'And recently we had a lovely guest from Greece who had traced her genealogy back to the Berrima cemetery, where you will also find the gravesites of German merchant navy personnel held in Berrima Gaol during World War I.

'This guest stayed with us for a few nights to visit the gravesite of her great grandmother and picked some roses from our beautiful garden to take with her.'

I wake beautifully refreshed in the comfy queen size bed and enjoy watching morning television with no one else reaching for the remote. I breakfast just up the road at Diego Arata's Berrima General Store & Cafe as the other shops and cafes of this historic village quietly open nearby. There is much to do in Berrima, beginning with a snack at Stones Patisserie, a meal at Eschalot (see our story on page 52) and a visit to original Georgian building Harper's Mansion just up the hill. You could also catch 'A Butcher, A Baker, a Bunch of Makers' at the newly revamped Berrima District Museum or take a stroll along the Berrima River Walk along the nearby Wingecarribee and read all about the POW and German Internment camp there from 1915 to 1919.

And, who knows, if you take the river walk you may well see me and some muddy kids with dogs, no longer wondering. Because now I know the Berrima Bakehouse Motel is an affordable relaxed and stylish local gem that punches above its weight and happily holds its own. Spread the word. **B**



BERIDA HOTEL

— bowral, southern highlands —

NEWLY REFURBISHED LUXURY HOTEL IN THE HEART OF BOWRAL

At Berida Hotel we provide a boutique hotel experience where history and grandeur meet modern luxury.



LUXURY
ACCOMMODATION



EUROPEAN
RESTAURANT & BAR



BAR AND LOUNGE

Originally built in 1925, and located just moments from the main street of Bowral, the Berida Hotel, radiates history and grandeur with 43 elegantly restored and fully air-conditioned hotel rooms, allowing you to relax and unwind while on your stay in the heart of the Southern Highlands.

Our onsite European Bistro and Bar serves the freshest local produce and an array of fine beverages in a warm and friendly atmosphere. With two conference rooms, complete Health Club including indoor heated pool, gym, tennis courts and luxurious Day Spa, the Berida Hotel is the perfect venue for your next weekend escape, romantic getaway, social engagement or corporate event.

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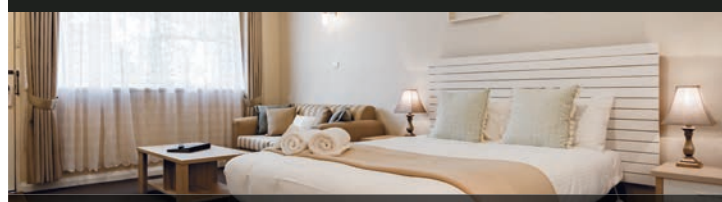
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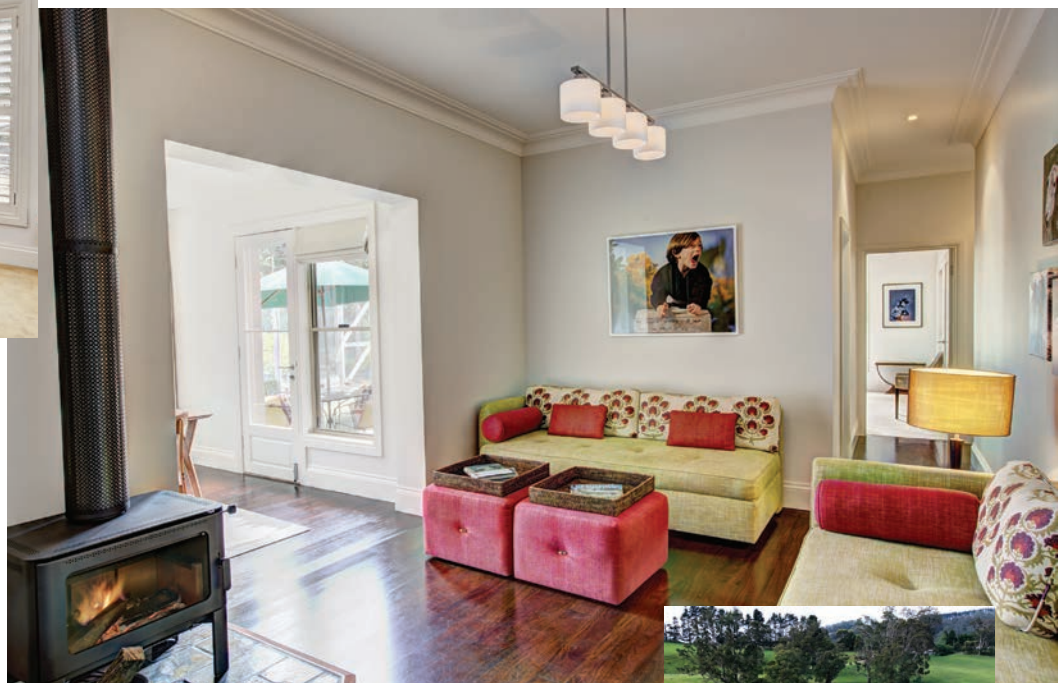
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FRESH AIR & FARM FUN

WITH THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS, THERE ARE FULL ON **FARMING ACTIVITIES AND SELF CONTAINED SECLUSION** ON OFFER AT THIS BEAUTIFULLY PRESENTED EXETER GEM. Words **Jane O'connell**



It seems fitting that the welcoming party for Exeter Farm Stay is of the animal variety. Angelique the alpaca hovers by a small flock of sheep grazing in the shade of eucalypts. She lifts her head and stares in the direction of our approaching car, committed to her guardian role but clearly not bothered by our presence.

The day before we arrived, a storm had brought down an enormous gum tree, which in turn damaged a perimeter fence, so hosts Ray and Jill had toiled for hours chainsawing the fallen tree and attending to repairs. A necessary part of farm life. Every day is different and guests are encouraged to explore and be as involved as they'd like, although vehicles and machinery are understandably off limits.

With a background in event management, Jill is perfectly suited to running a popular bed and breakfast with a side attraction of farm animals, and clearly loves providing for her guests. The self contained property is part of the main homestead building but has a private entrance and separate parking.

After a quick change into more farm appropriate footwear, we head off on our first adventure. One of the farm stay's most popular activities is feeding the animals. We help load up the tray of an all terrain vehicle with lucerne, hay bales and a bucket of oats, and Jill takes us on a guided tour of the 140 acre property. Down near the dam, a tiny timber hut known as the Hidden Cabin is offered to guests who might like to sit quietly and ponder nature, boil the billy for a cuppa or enjoy a glass of wine. Jill provides the ingredients for the cuppa but it's BYO anything else.

The utility lumbers up and over the hills, dodging large wombat burrows, to the cow paddock. With Jill at the wheel, guests are on gate duty, opening and closing as we pass

through. The blue bucket containing oats for the sheep has been strategically positioned in the centre of the vehicle's tray, out of the reach of enthusiastic cows, but one still managed to reach its nose in far enough to knock over the bucket and scatter the sheep treats everywhere, delivering just the right amount of country excitement for city guests.

Back at the apartment, there's plenty of outdoor space to run around, kick a ball or explore the homestead gardens. Inside, there are two bedrooms (configured as Queen + King or Queen + Twin) and a beautifully appointed bathroom. The main living area has a lounge area in front of the slow combustion wood fire, a kitchenette with continental breakfast (including homemade marmalade) provided and a dining area overlooking the rolling hills of cleared cattle country.

A cosy courtyard is just the right spot for a sundowner or breakfast the next morning. Four resident chooks scratch quietly nearby, only two are layers to keep egg production manageable, and next to the chicken coop, a healthy selection of fruit, vegetables and herbs grows in abundance. We spotted strawberries and blueberries, tomatoes, lettuce, thyme, mint and rosemary, but each season brings a different offering.

In between her impressive hosting activities, Jill also finds time to run the local Exeter Village Market (first Saturday of every month), which she bought in 2018. Originally from Melbourne and more recently Sydney, the couple downsized in the city and upsized in the Highlands where they'd owned a weekend for many years. They are passionate promoters of the area and provide a local's guide to activities, restaurants and wineries. With very little improvement needed, the only plans in the wind are to put in a swimming pool for guests to enjoy in the warmer months. **E**

DETAILS

Exeter Farm Stay
\$250 per night for two guests and \$350 for four guests. Minimum stay is two nights and a travel cot is available.

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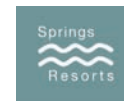
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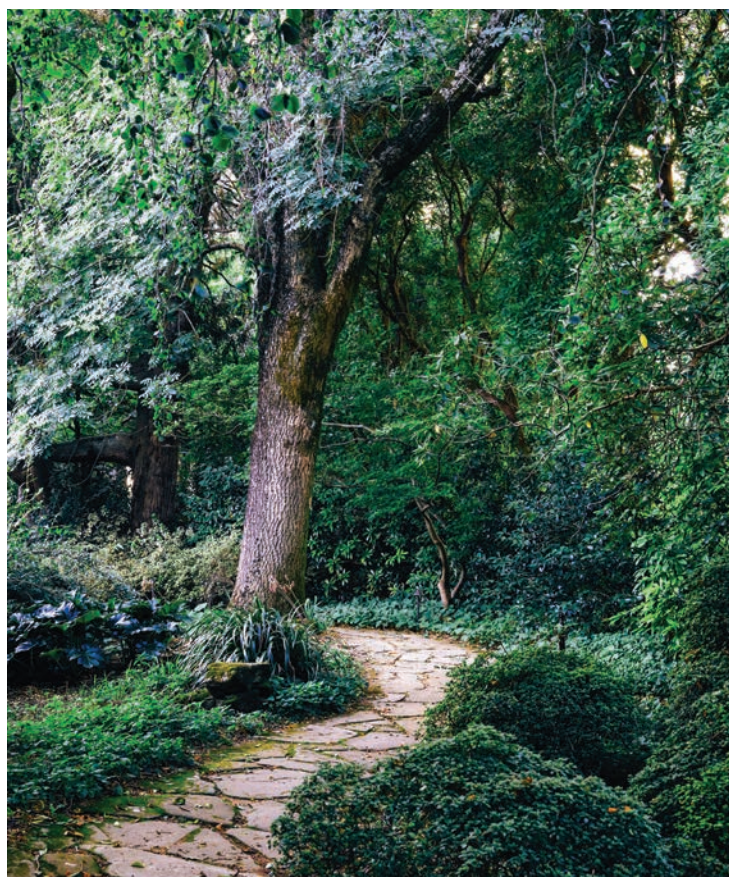


Milton Park Country Hotel & Spa

the dining room

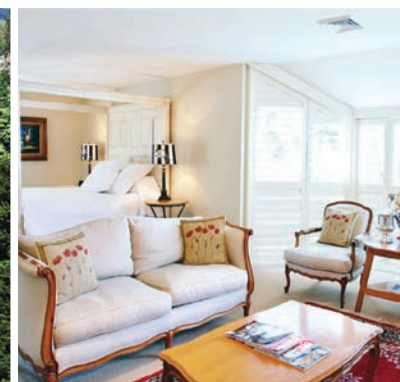


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visitsouthernhighlands.com.au



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Autumnal days are the perfect time to enjoy a swig or two of tasty cider, like the organic Pomologist brew from Robertson. Made from heritage and cider apples, some of which are grown locally, it's a nice tippie for a quiet drink with a friend or a rousing get together with the gang.
pomologistcider.com.au



Loose leaf lovers

Here at ESH we're big fans of tea brewed from loose leaves in the pot. And after draining the cup we've even been known to ponder over the future in the dregs. Whether you like to go the whole tea leaf reading hog or you're simply partial to a nice cuppa, pop into the Highlands Tea Company's shop on Boolwey Street in Bowral and choose from the dozen or more varieties available or buy some of their teas at Destination SH's Welcome Centre. Either way, we love the Lapsang Souchong and Chai ranges. Nothing better.
highlandsteacompany.com.au



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Lavender essential oil will also deal with bed bugs, spiders, silverfish, in fact any manner of little critters. Local Hill Top lavender farm Belle Fleur sells great lavender bags perfect for that very job. And if mossies are your problem, you need to investigate Robertson maker P&S's fun and effective range of repellents and soothers, including the Sun & Bites aloe based gel and Bugger Off. Our thoughts exactly. bellefleurlavender.com.au, perfumeandskincarecompany.com.au

SOFTLY DOES IT

With the arrival of cooler temperatures, it's time to get in touch with your inner nester and wrap up in one of these shrugs from the Australian Alpaca Barn in Berrima. And fact: alpaca wool is reportedly five times softer than a sheep's and alpacas are five times harder to shear so all the more special. australionalpaca.com



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Very SH and very now. twocountrycooks.com.au



TAKE IT ANYWHERE

You can't go wrong with stripes. Especially baton black and beige. Local maker Lynn Canning made this Lyndra Bags beauty, available exclusively at Southern Highlands Welcome Centre, but equally at home this winter on the streets of Milan or NY.



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VISITSOUTHERNHIGHLANDS.COM.AU

ESCAPE
LOVES



Warm up with a whisky

Not that we particularly need an excuse, but drinking single malt whisky when the weather gets colder just seems like a good idea. Speaking of which, Val and Elise from Joadja Distillery released their first bottling of Joadja Single Malt Whisky recently and it's a goodie, a true nod to the couple's Spanish heritage and historic Joadja's enthralling past. A fascinating blend. joadjadistillery.com.au

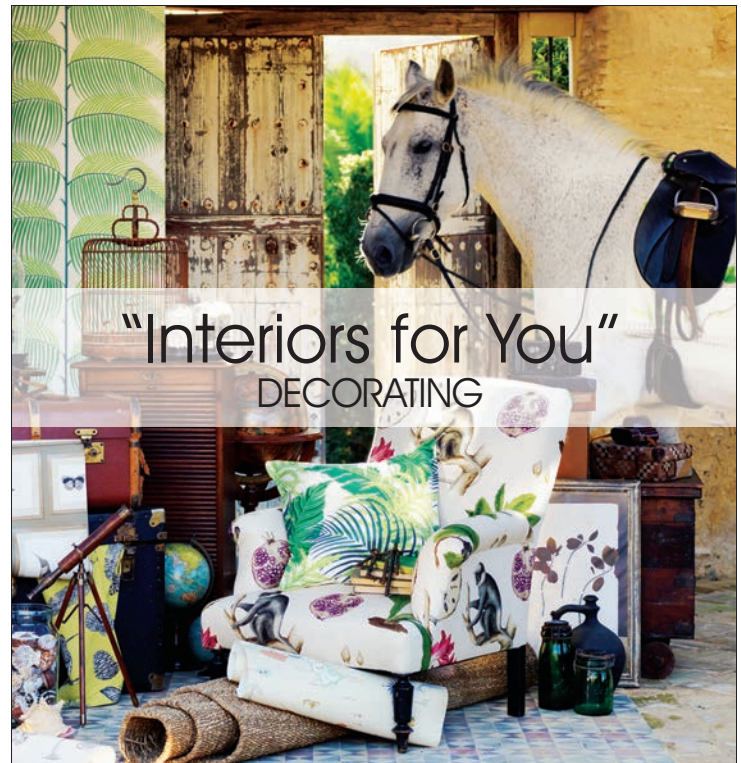
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THE LOW DOWN ON JOHN WATERS

Highlanders, treechangers, city escapers... the Southern Highlands is full of really interesting people living the dream. Actor and Robbo local John Waters is one of them.

What brought you to the Southern Highlands? A feeling of change being a good thing; and this one made sense economically and spiritually. **What's kept you here?** Can't go back! Actually, it is the beauty and peacefulness here that really works. **Favourite Southern Highlands hangout?** Home. When you've lived all your life in flats and terrace houses, an old farmhouse on five acres has a certain comfort factor. **Highly recommend?** Carrington Falls. Actually, no, don't go there. It's so beautiful that I don't want to spread the word. It's crap. **Don't miss...** The Big Potato at Robertson. One of the most spectacular tourist attractions in the Southern Hemisphere! **A word of advice to those contemplating visiting?** Always bring clothes suitable for every extreme weather condition known to meteorological science. **Best recent Southern Highlands discovery?** Bowral's public swimming pool, sorry, Aquatic Centre. Great on the 36°C days during our brief summer. **What's easy about living here?** Parking. **What's more challenging?** Winter. For someone like me who is hypothermic in anything below 18°C, it is a savage test of character. I think I fail every year. **Something that never fails to surprise you?** Despite the winter, I'm still here! **One change you'd make?** I'm a fatalist. The moment you start wishing things to be different from what they are, you are feeding dissatisfaction. It is what it is, and I'm okay with that. **John Waters is appearing in Bob Dylan Revisited May 10 at Enmore Theatre, Newtown.** ■

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THE BLISSFUL BURN

SERENDIPITOUS TIMING AND OLD FASHION SMARTS HELPED **LOCAL MAKER CASSANDRA ANGELINI CREATE HER BOUGIES DE LUXE CANDLES AND HOMEWARES RANGE.** ESCAPE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS ATTENDED A BOUGIES DE LUXE WORKSHOP TO DISCOVER WHY IT'S ALL ABOUT A CANDLE'S 'WARM THROW' AND HOW AN ICONIC BEAUTY BRAND HELPED MAKE THIS DREAM COME TRUE.

The 'lipstick effect' is a famous gauge of economic measure. First floated in the New York Times newspaper following 9/11, the theory goes that when markets are sluggish and people's purses are feeling the pinch, women stay away from major consumer purchases and instead buy themselves a lower cost comfort, such as a lipstick, to get their luxe shopping fix. Nearly two decades on, Cassie Angelini believes the same goes for her luxury candles.

'We all love a beautiful candle because number one it's an affordable luxury,' explained mum, maker and former accountant Cassie.

'We often can't afford to get to the hairdresser every month or to treat ourselves with that bottle of Chanel perfume we'd love but buying a candle costs less and gives the same result. The process of lighting a beautiful smelling candle is lovely and can somehow make your home more special, even when it is a mess. It's also a failsafe gift to buy for someone else because,

let's face it, everyone loves a beautiful smelling candle.'

True. Which is why ESH joined 11 other women at a two hour Bougies de Luxe workshop on an unseasonably hot Highlands day. The place is St Eloi Studio in Bowral, the home of Cassie's friends and fellow makers Pete and Shelley Burrows of Pete's Sheds. Pete often runs his furniture restoration and chalk painting classes from this charming French inspired studio, complete with rustic communal tables, large antique doors opening to a courtyard and candelabras overhead.

Cassie, who last year hand poured about 20,000 of her soy wax candles and also makes room sprays, diffusers, and bath oils, is open, friendly and informative. She is a workshop natural and gets the afternoon off with some background. An accountant by trade, Cassie has been making her luxury candles and bath oils for five years. Today she is ably aided by daughter Ava, 11, who one day plans to take over Mum's business and send herself to Harvard Law School.



DETAILS

Bougies de Luxe are available exclusively at The Orangery, Banyette Street, Bowral and Exeter General Store, Exeter or from bougiesdeluxe.com.au

Bougies de Luxe translates literally from the French as 'luxury candles' and Cassie began experimenting after her firstborn came along.

'I have always loved candles and the smell and atmosphere they bring to a home. But I didn't want a candle that smells great in the shop and entices you to buy it, thanks to its cold throw, and then doesn't smell like that when you get it home which is all about its warm throw. People want a candle they know and love and trust, which is in essence why I first started making my own.

'Before my son was born my favourite candles were by Jo Malone, which are beautiful but as a new parent, \$95 a candle was prohibitive. So I signed up to do a candle making workshop and thought, how hard can it be?'

We are about to find out. Making a candle sounds pretty straightforward... surely it's simply about putting fragrances in wax and letting it set. Yes? Err, no. Like any chemical equation, getting the formula right for any of Bougie de Luxe's 45 varieties, which include Magnolia & Jasmine, Green Apple and her clients' perennial favourite, French Pear is a science. But Cassie has the winning formula and Donna Hay is a customer. When she pictured Cassie's Pomegranate Luxe on the cover of her bestselling magazine, Cassie sold 5000 of those candles online in one week. But success has been slow burning.

'When I started off doing a candle workshop it all looked so easy, but when you get home you soon find out it is nothing but. I began doing all my trialling and testing on top of my stove at home and often it was like, sorry kids, dinner's postponed while I try this new recipe out. It was a big mess.

'For years I wrote everything down in a little exercise book, trialling temperatures and amounts of wax and fragrance. Candle making is an artform. You might walk away from this workshop and say, that is so easy, I'm going to be a great candle maker. Well I know from experience that when you get home, that's when the problems can start.'

Cassie uses soy wax and today she has it already melted in a small crockpot with a spout for easy pouring. One by one we have a go stirring the wax, which needs to be at a perfect 96 degrees for pouring. Then we add the quantity of the pure fragrance oils we have agreed upon for our candles today: perennial favourite, pomegranate and French pear. Cassie sources her oils from an Australian company Eroma which provide natural fragrance with no additives. The products are vital.

'Wax is a natural product and it's very temperamental,' says Cassie. 'You might go and add five fragrances and they work out great, and then you go and add vanilla, which is not a candle's best friend.

'Fragrance loading, which is basically the amount of fragrance you add to your wax, is pivotal. You need to use the exact amount. If you use more than the wax can take it is a waste of money and will give the candle a sweaty looking top.'

Wicking up is another element of candle making that sounds straightforward but is not. Once poured into the vessel, the wick must be perfectly straight and firm or it will not set properly and will stop the candle burning evenly right to the end, as Cassie ensures her commercial varieties do.

The workshop includes a delicious afternoon tea spread and Cassie shares her insider knowledge as we wait for our candles to set to take home. Although she hand pours hundreds of candles a day to meet online and local demand, the ritual of lighting one of her candles never fails to please her.

'The process of lighting a beautiful smelling candle at home is lovely. It is a way of unwinding, of spoiling yourself. It adds a bit of special to everyday life.'

If Cassie sounds like a true professional, she tells how she was given much needed help along the way by none other than Jo Malone, British doyen of luxury candles, who Cassie originally set out to emulate.

'The day I started making candles I decided, to hell with it, you never know, so I emailed Jo Malone. Purely by chance I had picked the right day because she had just sold to Estee Lauder, and she emailed me back with lots of tips for my candle making. It took me another two years of research before I actually put a candle on my website to sell because, as she told me, you have to be very sure of what you are selling before you do.' ■

Food+Wine



THE GREAT DEGRADER

IN A TUNNEL UNDER A HILL BETWEEN BOWRAL AND MITTAGONG LIES A FASCINATING BUT NOT SO WELL KEPT SECRET. WE VISITED MUSHROOM GROWER DR NOEL ARROLD'S UNDERGROUND WORLD OF DELICIOUS DECOMPOSITION...

Words **Alex Speed** Photos **Elise Hassey**



When Dr Noel Arrol lets slip he has dined with leaders of China's Communist Party, my initial suspicions are confirmed. Noel is no ordinary farmer. In fact, if I were to be really puerile, I'd say he's a really fun guy.

Terrible witticisms aside, Noel is a mushroom expert, a fungi fanatic. In fact the Australian microbiologist is a leading world authority on the spawning, growing and picking of gourmet and exotic fungi. I meet this sprightly 76-year-old at his place of work, namely a subterranean cave like tunnel, where I hear his tale of chowing down with the President of the People's Republic of China. And it soon becomes very clear that Noel is not your average senior citizen.

For the past 30 years Noel has grown exotic and gourmet mushrooms in a 650 metre long tunnel that runs under the hill from Bowral to Mittagong. Built in 1866 as part of the original single lane track from Sydney to Canberra, the tunnel, carved from limestone, became obsolete when a new double line track opened in 1919. During World War II it was used to hide munitions and, when hostilities ended, it lay dormant for years before its consistent humidity and temperature of 15-16°C were identified as perfect to replicate nature's requirements for mushroom growing. A friend sold the business to Noel in the 1970s. It's dim and slightly dank inside, which is ideal. Light is not important, as mushrooms do not photosynthesise.

'In the wild in Asia, where many exotic mushrooms originate, mushrooms grow in woods and within forest floor litter,' says Noel, whose tunnel is unique to Australia and famed within mushroom knowing circles. 'They like damp, cool conditions to grow and flourish, which is why the tunnel is perfect.'

Originally a Cooma boy, Noel studied science at Sydney University and had plans to become a teacher. He was persuaded otherwise when a professor casually mentioned grants were available for students following more research based work. He went on to write his PhD on diseases in mushrooms, and later studied at Penn State University's world renowned Faculty of Microbiology and Immunology, and The Glasshouse Crops Research Institute in Southampton, UK and the Max Planck Research Institute, Hamburg.

'I have always enjoyed my work as a scientist because it's all about systems,' says Noel. 'Cultivating systems, growing systems, picking systems that work. I am at heart a microbiologist after all, and fungi are very interesting organisms.'

Noel replicates the conditions of nature in his unique mushroom farm. The inoculation of the species of mushrooms he grows takes place in his Mittagong laboratory. Mushroom spawn is any substance that has been inoculated with mycelium, the vegetative growth of a fungus, and is the base for producing mushrooms.

Noel uses a tried and tested technique for growing mushrooms in the tunnel. Biodegradable spool shaped sacks filled with inoculated sawdust are spiked on every spare inch of space, like a giant wall of sewing bobbins, only these ones grow things. On the other side, logs fashioned from sawdust have the slower growing, prized shiitake. As well as the shiitake, Noel grows enoki, wood ear, shimeji, nameko and oyster varieties, as well as your more household types such as king brown, chestnut and button mushrooms.

After the mushroom spawn is transported to the tunnel, it will lay dormant in the inoculated logs Noel has fashioned from eucalypt sawdust before it begins fruiting. ►



Entering the mushroom tunnel for the first time is like walking into some Harry Potter like catacomb filled with thousands of tiny growing organisms. With its earthy smell, stone floors and huge steel reinforced door, it's the sort of environment a vampire, or a teenager come to think of it, might choose to inhabit.

Noel walks several kilometres a day up and down the tunnel. Mushroom growing is labour intensive and picking takes place six mornings a week for two hours with the help of a small workforce of mostly Taiwanese backpackers. Together they pick 1.7 tonnes or 1700 kilograms of mushrooms a week, which all go to market. Noel was the first person to bring the Swiss Brown variety to Australia under his business, Li-Sun Exotic Mushrooms, named after daughter Lisa and son Shane, nicknamed Sunnah which means son in German. Noel was also the first grower in Australia to produce fresh shiitake, and must take some of the credit for Australians being the second largest consumer of the button mushroom behind the French. Indeed, where once Noel's mushrooms were cooked in the kitchens of Sydney's hatted restaurants such as Tetsuya's, Bennelong and Quay, today he says he is pushed to keep up with demand from your average Jo.

'Since the explosion of those cooking shows on TV, with Manu and Peter and those MasterChef boys, we can barely keep up with demand. Coles and Woolworths are our big customers, but we sell to Harris Farm too. You can buy ours in Bowral,' says Noel.

When he is not in the tunnel, Noel is in his Mittagong laboratory spawning mushrooms, experimenting with new methods, and looking at new uses for fungi in the medical and pharmaceutical industries. Most of the species Noel grows occur naturally in forests as wood degrading fungi.



'Mushrooms in the wild have a unique and vital role in our ecosystem,' says Noel. 'They grow on dead trees and dead wood and use the carbon as a food source. Because of carbon in trees, the lignin can't decompose without fungi. The organic matter in the fungi decomposes and degrades the organic matter, returning the carbon back into the earth. Mushrooms are the earth's great degrader.'

Mushrooms are also a rich source of protein and food to many of China's population of two billion says Noel, who has made several trips with fellow world experts to discuss mushroom production. On his last visit he found himself seated as guest of honour next to then vice President of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping.

'He is also an agricultural scientist,' says Noel. 'He speaks English very well and was very interested in the growing we are doing in Australia.'

Tours of Noel's mushroom tunnel are held on the Sunday of every long weekend. The next is Sunday April 21 and Sunday June 9, Queens Birthday weekend. For more upcoming dates for tours li-sunexoticmushrooms.com.au ■



Cassie Wallace and Matty Roberts weren't particularly daunted taking over Eschalot, an iconic Highlands fine dining restaurant. Maybe it had something to do with catering for hungry wedding guests for two years beforehand. The pair talked about the past, present and future with ESH.

ESH: How long did you guys run your catering firm Violets and Vinegar before buying Eschalot? CW: We began Violets and Vinegar in 2012 after catering our own wedding because we couldn't find a caterer to produce the style of food we were hoping for. We wanted an abundance of food where our guests felt like they were having a feast in our home with us, not an underwhelming beef/chicken alternate drop. After being told by our friends and family that it was the best food they had ever eaten at a wedding, we realised there was a market for our personalised style. **ESH: When did you arrive in the Highlands?** MR: We officially moved to the Highlands in 2014 to take on the roles of executive chef and events manager at a wedding venue. **ESH: Why did you decide to move out of wedding catering? Or have you?** CW: We both love weddings and events! We have the privilege of sharing in one of the happiest days in the lives of our clients. The positive energy is infectious and there is instant feedback from 100 plus people about what you have provided. We still have Violets and Vinegar catering and we are still creating wedding cakes throughout the Highlands. **ESH: Were you looking for a restaurant to call your own?** MW: It had been a long

term dream of ours to have our own restaurant and we had been actively looking for approximately 12 months, ready to make the move. We had become limited by not having our own venue and we were more than ready to produce our food, in our own style, on our own terms.

ESH: Was it scary to take over one hatted Eschalot?

CW: Taking over any established business is always a little daunting. Eschalot has had a loyal following for many years and there was always the chance that a change in ownership would see this change also. We knew that once followers gave us the opportunity to show them what we had to offer we would be fine. We have been overwhelmed by the positive response from both our regular locals as well as the occasional visitors to the restaurant from Sydney and Canberra. **ESH:**

How have you made it your own? MR: We completely changed the decor of the restaurant, closing for three weeks to paint, polish and garden. While it is a much cleaner, contemporary look, it still has the charm that a building of this period has to offer. We also launched a new menu when we opened last spring, and we are continually evolving it. **ESH: Have you kept any of what it was?** MR: Yes. The cuisine is still fine dining, modern Australian with a French influence. **ESH: Cassie, can you describe Matt's style of cooking?** CW: Matty is obsessive over food and loves experimenting in the kitchen. He is also a perfectionist and is always looking to get the balance right in every dish he produces.

Being a creative helps tremendously when it comes to menu writing and plating. **ESH: Did you dine at the old Eschalot?** CW: Being the owners of Eschalot is a full circle experience for us. We dined here for the first time over eight years ago for a girlfriend's birthday. We absolutely loved the individual dining rooms and fireplaces as well as the personalised service that such a boutique establishment can offer. It was a long term dream of ours to find a little cottage to convert into a restaurant to produce a similar feel. When we discovered Eschalot was for sale, we knew it was the right move for us. **ESH: You have a young daughter. I'm guessing it's pretty demanding being chef and front of house and parents. How do you juggle?** CW: Ignoring unsolicited advice is the most important factor in keeping the balance for our family and business right. The wonderful thing is we are currently living on site, so Odessa is never far away. It gives us far more time with her than we would have if we had to pack down after service and head home at midnight. **ESH: What's the long term vision for the restaurant and you both?** MR: We are hoping to continue the success of Eschalot itself but also leave our mark on this gorgeous iconic building during our time here. We have heard so many stories of why 'the Breen's', which is what it was called in one form or another, has been so special to so many for over 30 years. It will be wonderful to put our own stamp on it.

Eschalot, 24 Old Hume Highway, Berrima. Thursday to Sunday 12.30-4.30pm; Thursday to Saturday 6-11.30pm
eschalot.com.au 📍

A REALLY GOOD PUD

IF, LIKE ME, YOU FIND THE BUN BUSINESS A BIT MUCH AT EASTER, YOU JUST MIGHT LIKE THIS SLIGHTLY COWARDLY BUT VERY CUSTARDY REINVENTION.

Words **Geoff Jansz**

This Easter I'm feeling a bit hot and cross. Everyone is turning up at our house with those accursed buns assuming we love them. Eating one every now and then would be fine. However half dozen and full dozen packs are regularly being plonked on our kitchen table. THERE IS AN OVERSUPPLY. Even in the song they're heavily discounted within a single line: 'One a penny, two a penny, hot cross buns'.

Naturally, I'm gracious enough to feign delight but invariably have to deal with the stockpile when our guests leave. (Never an issue, mind you, when it comes to Easter eggs.)

So, I have set to task during this Year of No Waste to make sure our chooks aren't the only ones dealing with the problem. Here's the result. A recipe that improves the flavour of the bun itself and can even be frozen before being baked long after pancake Tuesday to a puffy unexpected dessert to surprise your guests. You could say, a kind of rising from the dead. ■



**EASTER
BAKING**

Easter Bread and Butter Pudding



- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1/2 cup sultanas | zest 1 lemon and 1 orange, |
| 1/4 cup rum | finely chopped |
| 6 large eggs | 6 hot cross buns, broken into |
| 1 cup caster sugar | 2cm chunks |
| 2 teaspoons vanilla extract | mascarpone, to serve |
| 1 litre fresh cream | creme anglaise, to serve |
| 2 pinches cinnamon | |

1. Soak the sultanas in the rum for 1/2 hour.
2. In a bowl, place the eggs, caster sugar, 1 teaspoon vanilla and the cream and whisk well. Add the cinnamon, zests, the rest of the vanilla and combine.
3. Spread a layer of the broken hot cross buns over the base of a large pudding bowl or individual ramakins. Pour over some of the cream mixture and allow a few minutes to soak in. Cover with another layer of the bread, then cream mixture and repeat until the bowl is full and the bread has soaked up the cream mixture. Do not pack the bread in too tightly. Fill to the top with the remaining cream mixture.
4. Bake in a 160°C oven until the pudding is golden and shiny.
5. Serve with creme anglaise and mascarpone dolloped on top.



Geoff Jansz

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Autumn eating & cooking

FANCY GIVING COOKING A MISS AND TASTE TESTING WHAT OUR TALENTED LOCAL CHEFS AND PRODUCERS ARE UP TO THIS SEASON? HERE'S OUR AUTUMN RUNDOWN OF WHAT'S SURE TO GET YOUR TASTE BUDS EXCITED IN THE HIGHLANDS AS THE LEAVES TURN.

Words **Jill Dyson**

Local chefs unite

Nathan West, chef at The Press Shop Cafe in Bowral is particularly big on using local produce and is now teaming up with fellow local chefs including Diego Arata from The Berrima General Store & Cafe, Matthew Roberts from Eschalot in Berrima, head chef Peter Oakley and Leanne Ferreira from the Glass Cafe in Mittagong and Steve Santucci from Moonacres Kitchen in Robertson to run a series of dinners showcasing what's being grown in the Southern Highlands. Look out for these committed local chefs who are showcasing our best. Dinners held on the second Saturday of the month.

For more details contact Nathan West, chef@thepressshop.com.au

Canyonleigh General Store revival

We love our General Stores as they fulfil an important role as meeting places for the local community, and it's great to see Canyonleigh's functioning again. Dean McRae from the Bowral Golf Club has taken over the running of the Canyonleigh General Store and is opening for dinner on Friday nights to serve 'posh pub food' for the locals. He is hoping to have a liquor licence soon so he can restore the Store's important role as a providore and restaurant to the area. **Canyonleigh General Store, 152 Tulagong Road, Canyonleigh**

Preserve your excess!

If you have an abundance of fruit or veg in your garden and don't know what to do with it, Four Seasons Bistro in Mittagong is offering a preserving service. Bring your produce, jars and bottles to Sue and Derek, who will offer expert advice, calculate the cost and turn it into jams, pickles or chutney for you to enjoy throughout the year. What a jelly fine idea.

fourseasonsbistro.com.au

Mussett Holdings Free Range Eggs

We recently discovered another local farmer producing pasture raised eggs at Colo Vale. Mussett Holdings was started by Will, a former furniture maker, and his family from their small farm in 2016. You can order your eggs online for delivery or buy them from the Glass Cafe in Mittagong and other stockists. Try a jumbo fresh tray of 30 for \$14 or \$18 depending on size. Check out mussettholdings.com.au



Foodie events at The Loch, Berrima

Stand by for three more great foodie events from chef Brigid Kennedy. On Sunday April 7 The Loch's Festival of the Roast takes the art of roasting to an entirely new level with an indulgent seven course degustation menu that showcases local grass fed meats along with autumn vegetables and herbs. Each course will be accompanied by the hallmark wines of family run vineyards in the Southern Highlands and you'll hear from the producers and winemakers who put the food on the table. Two weeks later on Easter Sunday, April 21 bring your friends along for The Loch's annual paddock to plate set menu. Expect all the special Easter touches, including an egg hunt for the kids at 11am and 2pm in the gardens. And then on Sunday May 12 treat your mum or your kids' mum to a special treat in the gardens. Choose between a three course set menu or an original take on the classic High Tea with sharing platters full of indulgent sweet and savoury fare. All events are usually sell outs, so book early.

theloch.net.au

Beery good cuisine

Talented chef Katey Shaw will be working closely with head brewer Cameron James to further develop Southern Highlands Brewing and Taphouse's beer cuisine this season. In particular they are focusing on repurposing the brewers' grain into their very own Taphouse Lavosh, soon to be available for retail along with similar items. A really great place to go out with friends and visitors, and a huge plus for the Southern Highlands.

southernhighlandsbrewing.com.au

Dinners at BARN by Biota

Dates are now available to try this great new concept for the Highlands: a communal share format dinner consisting of local ingredients available on the day at BARN by Biota. Arrive at 5pm and experience the property with the chefs, take a walk through the orchard, visit the bee hives, then tuck into the food and wine, \$190pp all included, on Friday March 8 and 22. barnbybiota.com

Workshopping at Piccolo Farm, Thirlmere

It's time for autumn workshops at the fabulous Piccolo Farm at Thirlmere, kicking off with how to plan and grow your own organic home garden from soil and seed to harvest at the Piccolo's market garden on Sunday March 17. On March 31, local natural beekeepers Emily from Bearfootbeekeeper and Bianca from Ta'moor Honey will give you the buzz on keeping your own hive. On April 7 there's the Paddock to Cake workshop where you'll taste edible flowers and learn how to use and decorate with them. Then on April 14 join Nadine Brown of Wild Flora Studio to create a unique bouquet using fruit and veg grown at Piccolo, and on May 12 it's Piccolo's Intro to Organic Gardening. So much choice for green fingered foodies out there, and all workshops include morning tea and a farm tour.

piccolofarm.com.au

Cooking up an Italian storm

Chef Marco Salvestrin, cousin of Southern Highlands Winery's Eddy Rossi, continues his interesting program of cooking classes this autumn, as well as two themed Italian nights, including a tribute to Italian region Veneto and Friuli on May 4. Join Marco and learn how to make iconic Italian pizza and focaccia on March 29. On April 26, master the delicate art of making risotto al funghi and, who knows, your funghi may very well hail from Noel's mushroom tunnel (page 44). The trick to making formaggio and ricotta will be revealed on May 31. All classes at Southern Highlands Winery, Sutton Forest include a glass of wine on arrival, the cooking demonstration, a winemaker's talk and tour, and a two course dinner (with vegetarian option available). Workshops run from 6-8.30pm and cost \$65pp. The Veneto and Friuli tribute nights include a four course dinner of traditional Venetian and northeast Italian food for \$75pp plus matching wine. Bookings for all events essential at southernhighlandswinery.com.au 📅



MOONACRES FARM AUTUMN HARVEST COOKING CLASS + LUNCH

Join the award winning team led by farmer Phil Lavers at Moonacres Farm in Fitzroy Falls for the first of their eagerly anticipated food experiences. Stroll the paddocks at Moonacres, hand pick some of Moonacres produce (some of which makes its way to nearby Moonacres Kitchen in Roberston where chef Steve uses it), learn to make the most of this season's offerings and celebrate the best of autumn with a long lunch in the orchard. For details about the Autumn Harvest Cooking Class and Lunch, and other upcoming events including a school holiday gnocchi making class, check out moonacres.com.au

GROWTH SPURT

MANY OF US DREAM OF LEAVING BEHIND THE 9 TO 5 WORK CYCLE, BUYING SOME LAND AND RECONNECTING WITH THE EARTH. BRILLIG FARM MARKET GARDENERS AND PARTNERS IN LIFE SAM COSTELLO AND ELISABETH CRAWFORD DID JUST THAT. THEY TELL ESH ABOUT THEIR GROWING LIVES.

Why the treechange? Sam: I worked in a university with a large team and was responsible for strategy and business systems. Elisabeth was part of student administration. We lived in the inner west under the Sydney flight path, and work and home was becoming busier and noisier. I started yearning for a clean, uncluttered, quiet life. When the kids finished school and were off, the time came to leave. **How did you happen upon Brillig Farm?**

Elisabeth: Living in the Southern Highlands was a long held fantasy and we'd been looking for a while. We loved Exeter and started looking there specifically. The plan was to move here and develop some income streams, then transition out of the workforce. Growing things was definitely part of the plan, and we found a 20 acre block with great soil and dams, paddocks and trees. We wanted to have windows that looked out onto something green and far away. **Was market gardening always the long held dream?** Sam: Not at all! We did a

market gardening course a couple of years before making the move and decided it was too much hard work! Not long after moving here I took a redundancy and I was sitting in the Exeter General Store when I got an email offering a discount on an online urban farming course. Intensive farming in a small space seemed much more interesting than what I'd been planning. So I signed up and within two months we were selling produce at the Moss Vale farmers market. **Why the name?** Elisabeth: Brillig is from the poem Jabberwocky by Lewis Carroll. Basically it means whatever you want it to. We love the poem, and wanted a name that didn't come with other connotations. **What do you grow?** Sam: Thirteen



FOOD
HEROES

varieties of leafy greens, including microgreens, and many different varieties of radishes, beetroot, potatoes, turnips, tomatoes, carrots, pumpkins, herbs, edible flowers and garnishes. **How did you find strong commercial footing in the Highlands so quickly?** Elisabeth:

We supply the restaurant trade and

we do a line of chemical free salad mix and microgreens to the consumer market through Exeter Village Markets and Berrima General Store Cafe. We had one customer tell us with tears in his eyes our beans tasted like when he was a child. Another said it was like eating at Tetsuya's. That's pretty special to us. Jill Dyson (On the Food Path and ESH food writer), Brigid Kennedy (The Loch & Southern Highlands Food Clusters) and Phil Lavers (Moonacres Farm) have been amazing in recommending and helping us get a good strong customer base. We wouldn't be where we are today without them. **Some of your vegetables are exotic. How did that eventuate?** Sam: Living in the city I'd never thought about



how limited the produce selection is in supermarkets. When we started farming I did a lot of research into what we would grow, and it didn't take me long to realise there is a cornucopia of food plants out there. So we started looking at plants that looked and tasted exciting and experimented. I love the idea of plants that were used historically as well as plants used by non western cultures. There is such a huge range of delicious edible plants out there used by millions of people over thousands of years and we're missing out. **You are not organic but 'grow as if we were'.** What does that mean? Sam: To get a tasty, nutritious, plant involves interactions from multiple systems: the soil, climate, insects, us. The choices we make as we grow impact positively or negatively on these systems, so we don't use anything that isn't approved as organic input. We keep tilling to a minimum. We brew up an amazing probiotic mixture of bacteria, yeast and fungus that boosts healthy soil biological activity. **It sounds like a lot of hard work...** Elisabeth: Our day really depends on the weather and time of year. In summer we work about 10 hours a day; we get up before dawn and work until it gets too hot then go back out until dusk. In winter it's kind of the opposite. We wait till the sun's up and the frost clears and then get to it. **What are the discoveries you've made since moving here?** Elisabeth: We completely lucked out on the soil here, it's very good. Sam has diligently transformed bare paddock into umpteen prolific growing beds and it's been a steep learning curve growing, building a business, nurturing a relationship and she's doing it superbly. I found the move pretty challenging, and it's taken me all this time to feel really present in this new lifestyle. It's brought a lot of joy to our lives. Sam: Elisabeth is brilliant at building solutions. She can build a bathroom out of a paperclip and a bit of 2 'x 4'. Here she's flourished and designed and built so many of our farm tools, it's incredible. Me, I always knew I could focus but here I really focus and persist. I've started to think of myself as a Welsh mountain pony: nothing flash but I just keep putting one foot in front of the other until it's done. Living in the city I was inside or, if outside, surrounded by structures and concrete. Here the sky is enormous and goes on and on, and changes all the time. The light shifts and changes tone. It's incredible. brilligfarm.com.au 📱

EXOTIC PRODUCE FROM BRILLIG FARM

NIVITHI A vine from Sri Lanka and India with shiny red stems and thick glossy leaves. Grows like crazy in summer and a great addition to curries and stir fries. Use it instead of spinach in a spanakopita.

BLACK MINT A massive marigold that grows to 3 metres tall. We use this as a herb to flavour salads. It can also be made into a pesto with chilli, garlic and lime, and used as a marinade on white meat. The long, serrated leaves have an amazing citrus, minty, slightly pineapple flavour. Watching people's faces as they taste it is priceless.

MYOGA GINGER Native to Japan, China and Korea, this is a deciduous ginger. Unlike the traditional ginger it's the shoots and flowers that are eaten, not the rhizome. The tender crunchy shoots can be chopped and added raw to dishes. The shoots and flowers are often pickled in Japanese cuisine.

PURSLANE Native to Australia (and a bunch of other places). The variety we grow is upright and has long, fleshy, blunt leaves. We use them in our salad mix in summer.



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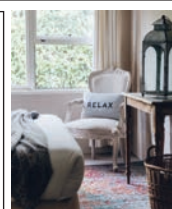
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PINT TO PADDOCK

We love a good collaboration story at Escape SH, and every issue we try to highlight local makers, growers and producers doing exciting new things with fellow growers, chefs and makers.

Take Fitzroy Falls farmers Katrina and Sam Sparke who own Redleaf Farm. Not the sort to sit back and let life take its turns, they are always on the front foot looking for ways to diversify, share knowledge, and improve the quality of their gold medal free range suckling pigs and lambs.

As well as being busy with their animals, Katrina and Sam are simultaneously parenting four kids and accommodating visitors to the Highlands in two meticulously renovated train carriages on their property. Plus, now they are collaborating with brewers Jacob and Deb Newman at Eden Brewery in Mittagong, who are also partial to a bit of sharing.

‘At Redleaf Farm we take Eden Brewery’s waste product of spent grain and feed it to our suckling pigs,’ Katrina tells ESH. ‘It is highly nutritious, delicious and otherwise a problem to get rid of. The flavours and grains vary with each batch of beer, but at present we are feeding it to our piglets three days a week on average.’

Enter Cassie and Matt, new owners of Eschalot (see page 47), and loved Bowral restaurant Onesta Cucina.

‘Both are big fans of our award winning piggies and know that what they eat does affect the taste of the meat,’ says Katrina. ‘It’s lovely that these chefs choose to also pair the pork with the Eden beer, either in cooking or serving, completing a lovely circle of support and providing a unique food experience that is a win for all.’

Recently Eschalot has been serving the pickled piglets, along with Eden beer, in a dish made with macerated mandarins from another local grower. And Onesta Cucina is planning a ‘drunk pork’ dish using Eden beer, says Katrina, who also regularly supplies lamb and pork to Josh’s Cafe at Berrima and BARN by biota.

‘I am sure both will be amazingly delicious,’ Katrina says, ‘And as a local, a grower and a food lover, I think it’s rare and special to be able to enjoy this level of transparency and provenance in our local produce. You could say it’s from pint to paddock to plate.’

**redleaf-farm.com edenbrewery.beer
eschalot.com.au onestacucina.com.au** ■



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AUTUMNAL EXCURSIONS

AUTUMN IS A GREAT GROWING AND DOING TIME IN THE HIGHLANDS, AND THE RANGE OF FOOD EXPERIENCES ON OFFER JUST KEEPS EXPANDING. ESCAPE SH TAKES A LOOK AT SOME OF THE NEW OFFERINGS. FOR MORE HAPPENINGS, TURN TO PAGE 50.

Lunch and a vino

With a new name, Highlands Harvest Feasts, and a new calendar of seasonal culinary events, luxury food and experience provider Amanda Fry kicks off the year with Dine in the Vines at boutique Canyonleigh winery Far Ago Hill. This al fresco lunch to celebrate the autumn wine harvest will see you feast on locally grown produce and sample much of winemaker Katrina Hill of Far Ago Hill's offerings. Enjoy her pinot gris, syrosa and shiraz outside in the lovely Canyonleigh landscape. March 23, 12.30-3.30pm;

wildfoodadventures.com.au



Source, Shop, Sup

Spend a Saturday looking for mushies in the Highlands, then have them cooked and served to you on locally made sourdough. Head into Bowral and see why famed vintage outlet Dirty Janes and The Mill are such gems, then take your new wares (and foraged fungi) to Bendooley Estate and collapse at the cellar door for some wine tasting or a coffee. How civilised. Sydney pick up available. April 13 & 27, May 11 & 18;

wildfoodadventures.com.au

Cooking with Mumma

Helen Vlahakis is a Sydney solicitor with a Mediterranean intergenerational love of food who made the part time treechange to the Highlands six years ago but moved here permanently last month. Taught by her Greek grandmother and mum as a girl, Helen is hosting two day workshops at her 100 acre Kangaloon property, where she aims to show that delicious food doesn't have to be at MasterChef level in order to bring joy and deliciousness to the table. Instead homecooking, says Helen, is about the quality of the local seasonal produce and her aim is to inspire foodies to live by a more seasonal diet. Sounds delicious. Participants can choose to take part over one or two days, 10am to 3pm. Summer Tomatoes, March 27 and/or 28; Autumn Goodness Sweet Treats, May 7 and/or 8;

mamascountrykitchen.com.au



Helen Vlahakis



Kirstine McKay

Green Fingered Good Life

Another clever Highlands cook, nurturer and grower Kirstine McKay, is also running workshops, this time in Bowral. Kirstine, the owner of historic home Greenlaw, which has established gardens and a vegie garden to die for, will welcome green wannabes to her Gardening & Green Living Beginners workshops. That's where she will showcase new ways of growing your own food, propagating and planting, keeping chooks and making your own environmentally friendly household products like beeswax wraps and room spray. Wander about the lovely Greenlaw as Kirstine shares her methods and secrets, and enjoy lunch on the wisteria laced verandah full of new ideas and inspiration. Gardening & Green Living Workshop, April 7, 10am-4pm; **lifeatgreenlaw.com**

Feeling clucky?

Speaking of chooks, if you (like me) are set on finally acquiring some feathered friends for the backyard, what better place to meet them than at Jamberoo Mountain Farm. These girls, raised by Nicole and Lachie Feggans, are completely pasture raised and lay hundreds of dozens of eggs from their beautiful mountain home. But even in truly free range luxury, a girl's gotta produce, so they are retired and put out to pasture, rehomed with friendly locals every six months or so. And the next moving out date is set for the end of this month, says Nicole. 'Yes, we are planning on moving on the next lot of hens as backyard hens. They are still very fit and will lay for a few more years yet, so we are always looking for good homes. Even though it's so hard to part with them!' If you're interested in a used but still useful chook or two for the backyard, keep an eye on @jambeeroomountainfarm or contact Nicole directly at **hi@jambeeroomountainfarm.com.au**



DETAILS

Joadja Winery

Cnr Greenhills and Joadja roads, Berrima
Weekends 10am-5pm;
Mondays, Thursdays
Fridays 12-5pm
joadjawinery.com.au



DREAM JOB

IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT WHEN THESE NOVICE WINERY OWNERS SAW JOADJA ESTATE. AND AFTER A CRASH COURSE ON THE JOB WITH THE PREVIOUS OWNERS, THE FLIRTATION HAS BECOME A FULL BLOWN OBSESSION WITH THE VINEYARD.

Words **Jane O'connell** Images **Elise Hassey**

Beyond its natural beauty, the Southern Highlands is known for attracting artisans, farmers and producers with a passion to chase their dreams. Four years ago, retail liquor worker Matt Toomey declared to partner Siobhan Maloy his dream was to become a winemaker. Maloy, a school teacher loved the idea. She put together a shortlist of wineries to inspect and within weeks the couple found themselves wandering through the vines of Joadja Estate, just outside Berrima.

'This was the second winery we looked at,' says Matt, 'We saw it and fell in love with it.'

It's easy to see why. Joadja Estate is the region's oldest vineyard and has a relaxed charm that sits well with its artisan approach to winemaking. From the wisteria framed entrance opening onto a shady courtyard to the earthy hues of the cellar door, the historic estate is a delightful mix of family home, established winery and popular weekend

picnic spot. Matt and Siobhan (along with Siobhan's parents) became Joadja Estate's new owners and have maintained the vibe that encourages visitors to stay longer and return often.

Original owners Kim and Frances Moginie planted the region's first vines here more than three decades ago and started making wines that helped put the Southern Highlands on the map of Australian cool climate wine regions.

Since taking over in 2016, Matt and Siobhan have infused their own style, including the tasting room with a feature wall that invariably sparks conversation. Using the staves of discarded wine barrels, Matt spent countless hours seasoning the timber strips and fixing them individually to the wall to create an inspired work of upcycled art. Siobhan had a vision for the wine bottles and, with the help of a Texan based artist who happened to get in touch



out of the blue at the right time, has created a fun series of labels celebrating local icons. Watercolour paintings of tulips, wombats, Old Berrima Gaol and a miner's lamp and bagpipes from nearby Joadja Town give the bottles a distinctly Highlands appearance.


But as any vigneron knows, it's what's inside the bottle that counts, and getting that part right is a combination of long hours, quality vines and the right weather conditions at the right time. Joadja's 15 acres of vines are hand pruned and at harvest time the grapes hand picked by a professional crew.

Matt worked alongside the previous owners for their first harvest on a crash course he described as 'exciting but challenging'. He soaked up the tips and tricks from the veteran winemakers on the job, working up to 15 hours a day.

Joadja's 2017 and 2018 vintages are the first produced by Matt and the verdict is positive. Their Summer Rosé, made from predominantly cabernet grapes, is a true crowd pleaser, with a deep pink hue and a hint of strawberry on the palate. At just 10% alcohol, it's light and very drinkable,

perfectly suited to a picnic lunch. Siobhan's favourite, the 2018 Pinot Grigio is crisp and refreshing, a classic cool climate variety for the region and sure to be a big seller. For something completely different sample their boysenberry liqueur, a decadent rich red tippie Matt calls 'ice cream topping for adults'.

Taking on a mature winery with the heritage of Joadja Estate could have been intimidating for a young couple fresh to the world of winemaking, but Matt and Siobhan are enthusiastic about their new lifestyle. Baby Cooper arrived in September last year and has adapted well to the family business, sleeping through most activities, including a live music event when he was just four weeks old.

Joadja Estate has many drawcards for visitors, from the family friendly picnic lunch, to lazy afternoons listening to music, enjoying woodfired pizza or a cheese plate and sampling a glass or two of some of the region's loveliest wines. The cellar door is open Thursday to Monday and live music events are held every long weekend. Wines are available to purchase at the cellar door, online and through their wine club, De-Vine. 



JOADJA

Joadja Rd

Woollybark Caves Rd

JELLORE
STATE FOREST

COLO VALE

ALPINE

Old South Rd

South West Express Way

Wineries, Breweries & Distilleries

Compton Park Rd

Old Hume Hwy

Centennial Rd

Orleys Hill Rd

BOWRAL

MEDWAY

Medway Rd

BERRIMA

NEW
BERRIMA

BURRADOO

Eridge Pak Rd

WINGECARRIBEE RIVER

Kangaloon Rd

GLENQUARRY

KANGALOON

WINGECARRIBEE
RESERVOIR

MOSS VALE

Illawarra Highway

SUTTON
FOREST

BURRAWANG

Parrsons Lake

BUNDANOON

PENROSE

Penrose Rd

Follow our cellar door trail.

1. Eden Brewery

1/19 Cavendish St, Mittagong.
Open Wed-Sun 12-8pm.
4855 2696

2. Artemis Wine

46 Sir Charles Moses Ln,
Mittagong. Open Wed-Sun
& public hols from 10am.
0498 842 654

3. Tertini Wines

Lot 5 Kells Creek Rd,
Mittagong. Open 7 days
10-5pm. 4878 5213

4. Joadja Estate

110 Joadja Road, Berrima.
Open weekends 10-5pm.
Thurs, Fri & Mon 12-5pm.
4878 5236

5. Joadja Distillery

1760 Joadja Rd Joadja.
Open for private group tours
& bookings. 4878 5129

6. Bendooley Estate

Cellar Door 3020 Old Hume
Hwy, Berrima. Open 7 days
10-5pm. 4877 2235

7. Centennial Vineyards

252 Centennial Rd, Bowral.
Open 7 days 10-5pm.
4861 8722

8. Southern Highlands Brewing Company Kitchen & Taphouse

490 Argyle
Street, Moss Vale. Thurs
5.30-10pm, Fri & Sat 12-10pm,
Sun 12-7pm. 4899 7100

9. Mount Ashby Estate

128 Nowra Rd, Moss Vale.
Open Thurs-Sun & public
hols. 11-5pm. 4869 4792

10. Southern Highlands Wines

Cnr Oldbury Rd & Illawarra Hwy,
Sutton Forest. Open 7 days
10-5pm. 4868 2300

11. St Maur Southern Highlands Estate

Old Argyle Rd, Exeter.
Open Thurs-Mon 10.30-
4.30pm. 4883 4401

12. Sallys Corner Wines

257 Sallys Corner Rd, Exeter.
Open Sat-Sun & P.Hols
10.30-4.30pm. 4883 4999

13. Cuttaway Hill Wines

212 Sally's Corner Rd, Exeter.
Open Fri-Sun 10:30am - 4:30pm.
Other times by appointment
0409 902 982

14. Sutton Forest Estate Wines

21 Black Horse Ln, Sutton Forest.
Open Fri-Sun & P.Hols 10-5pm.
4878 9278

15. Eling Forest Winery & Cellar Door

12587 Hume
Hwy, Sutton Forest. Open 7 days
10.30-4.30pm. 4858 1788

16. Cherry Tree Hill Wines

12324 Hume Hwy, Sutton
Forest. Open 7 days.
Thurs-Mon 10am-5pm.
Tues & Wed 12noon-4pm

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Enjoy Autumn at Artemis

Red and golden hues of the grape leaves provide a colourful backdrop to the outdoor space on the lawn at the Cellar Door during autumn.

Learn a little more about the cool climate wines of our region from our friendly cellar door staff. Rest and rejuvenate as you enjoy fine wine, mead, cider, beer, accompanied with a charcuterie board or wood fired pizza all made on the premises.

From October to March, various outdoor events are held; such as Vinyl Nights or Movie in the Vines. Check out the Events page on the website. If you are looking for an intimate, relaxed venue for your next celebration, consider us. The venue is available for hire for a range of private events.



46 Sir Charles Moses Lane, Mittagong 2575
5 minutes from Mittagong - 8 minutes from Bowral

P: 0401 199 075

www.artemiswines.com.au

Please note wood fired pizzas are held every Sunday, but are weather dependent, so are most of our events (outdoors set up). Please call us to confirm.



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Get moving

TAKE TO THE BEATEN TRACK

You really don't have to go far in the Southern Highlands to get yourself away from it all and into the bush. With Morton National Park (one of NSW's largest) on our doorstep, stretching from Bundanoon to Fitzroy Falls, and NSW's newest National Park (not yet named) at the former Tugalong Station in Canyonleigh, there is no excuse for not discovering the Highlands on foot. You can do it under your own steam of course or as a member of one of the many walking groups about, such as Southern Highlands Bushwalkers Inc. Walking lover and member Brett Neil chose some of his favourite Southern Highlands walks for you to try this autumn. Just remember to wear the right clothing, take a hat and water, and tell someone where you are going.

Bonnum Pic, High Range

A 16km walk that goes to Bonnum Pic on the knife edge ridge that juts out into the Wollondilly Valley in Nattai National Park. Best in the cooler months, this walk has everything, including valley views, on and off track walking, rock scrambling and route finding. Great vistas. After Mittagong, take Wombeyan Caves Road and turn right into Wanganderry Road. Parking is at the end of the dirt road. The grade is easy to intermediate. Seven hours round trip.

Wombat Hill Lookout Trail, Meryla

This 13km walk begins at Meryla Pass in Morton National Park and follows the fire trail along the ridge with views towards Crankeys Creek and Lake Yarrunga overlooking Kangaroo Valley. Mixture of fire and rough off track. Easy to intermediate.

Dtharowal Creek and Missingham Steps, Robertson

This is an 8km return walk through Budderoo

National Park with a steep descent through rainforest to Dtharowal Creek and Lorna Doone's Pool via Missingham Steps (carved last century). It is a more challenging walk, graded as medium to hard.

Tooth's Walking Track to Bundanoon Creek, Bundanoon

A challenging 3km walk for those who are fit and don't mind a steep climb. It has spectacular views and an alluring swimming hole when you reach the creek level. The walk, for the experienced, begins at Tooth's Lookout. Allow 3 1/2 hours for the round trip.

Box Vale Walking Track, Mittagong

This 4km walk follows the historic railway line through the bush and cuttings. There is also a 1.8km track to 40 Foot Falls and a steep track that leads to a vantage point below the falls. The initial 4km is an easy walk but allow three hours.

Mount Jellore, High Range

An outstanding landmark in the Nattai National Park, Mount Jellore is reached via a 10km walk at the end of Soapy Flat Road off Wombeyan Caves Road. The walk follows a fire trail through private property and is very steep in some places but has spectacular views with a long, steep ascent and descent. A challenging walk for experienced walkers. Allow five hours.

Belmore Falls, Wildes Meadow

These beautiful waterfalls are accessible by a track near a cliff side, but please take care because it is not maintained by National Parks.

Amphitheatre Walk, Bundanoon

The three hour walk from Gambell's Rest travels through the Bundanoon gullies in Morton National Park and leads to Fairy Bower Falls. There is some steep stair climbing to do so reasonable fitness is required. shb.org.au



ON TWO WHEELS

If you prefer to ride, you can join the thousands of cyclists who descend on the Highlands every year to compete in races such as the Twin Falls Cottages Rare Cancers Australia Mountain Bike Challenge in May or the Bowral Classic in October. Local Zac Hulm, the president of the Southern Highlands Cycling Club and one of the organisers of the recent P2P Cycle Challenge and Kosi Climb (a 200km race from Parliament House in Canberra to Thredbo in the Snowy Mountains to raise money for Rare Cancers Australia), is a keen racer and rider shares his favourite road and mountain bike rides with Escape SH.

Road bikes for the pros

The Mount Gibraltar Hill Climb is used as part of the road championships. It is a challenging Cat 2 Climb that is both tough and scenic.

Greenhills Road represents all the Highlands has to offer in terms of challenging courses, with very little in the way of flat terrain. Comes in both summer (one lap) and winter (two laps) versions, and is often used as part of the Southern Division Interclub series of races.

Hanging Rock at Penrose has a Classics Finish feel, with the final climb to the line favouring those who like a solid climbing sprint.

Out at High Range the Wombeyan Caves Road features the same starting climb as that of Greenhills and then extended sections of rolling road that always feature a lot of Highlands wind.

Bundanoon is frequently used as the final race in the Southern Division Interclub series. It follows the Highland Way from Bundanoon to Tallong and back.

Another winter course, Canyonleigh is a challenging rolling road with short, punchy climbs. Almost always used as part of the Road Racing Championships, it demands attention and the ability to maintain a high amount of momentum for extended periods. ►



EASY RIDER

AND OF COURSE IF GOING SLOWER IS MORE YOUR SPEED THERE ARE MANY BIKE TRACKS THROUGHOUT THE HIGHLANDS FOR MORE POTTERING BY PEDAL. WE LOVE THE BONG BONG TRACK NEAR MOSS VALE AND CHERRY TREE WALK (&RIDE) IN BOWRAL. WHY NOT STOP OFF AT STUMPS CAFÉ, BRADMAN OVAL FOR A COFFEE AFTERWARDS. IN OUR HUMBLE THEY MAKE THE BEST MELTING MOMENT BICCHIES IN THE HIGHLANDS. AND HEY, AFTER ALL THAT BIKING, YOU'VE EARN'T IT. **BRADMAN.COM.AU**

On the Track

The Eridge Park Velodrome in Burradoo is home of the Bowral Cup and the proving ground of many a young State and World track champion, including local hero Caleb Ewan. The outdoor velodrome is 333m in length with 30 degree banking and a smooth, grippy concrete surface.

Mountain Biking

Close to both Mittagong and Bowral, Welby is one of the few locations in the Highlands where riders can easily access single track riding.

On the other side of the Highlands, Wingello State Forest is frequently used for mountain biking competitive events both short and long. Trails are well marked for a variety of abilities and are well maintained by club trail builders. The annual Willo Enduro takes place there on March 10 and the Shimano MTB Grand Prix happens there on May 18.

Located on the private grounds of Brad McGee's Twin Falls Bush Cottages in Fitzroy Falls is a ride that is frequently used as part of the National Series as well as various three hour events that operate within the area. It is the home of Rare Cancers Australian Mountain Bike Challenge on May 19 **rarecancersaustralia.com.au southernhighlandsc.com.au**

The Willo Endurance, Wingello

Another terrific bike event to get involved with this autumn. The Willo Enduro was started in memory of much loved local, keen mountain biker and editor of Enduro magazine James Williamson, who died in his sleep in 2010 from a previously undiagnosed heart condition. It is an annual race which attracts more than 500 riders to the Highlands, and this year is part of the XCM MTBA Mountain Bike Cup. Riders of all ages can choose to compete in 25km, 50km or 75km around a 25km loop in Wingello State Forest. All entry fees go back into local junior mountain bike development in the area and an annual training camp for juniors held every year in November. **Sunday March 10, Wingello State Forest jameswilliamson.com.au**

The Legendary Australia Wingello Forest Endurance Ride, Wingello

Endurance riding is a marathon sport on four legs and the annual Wingello Forest Endurance Ride is one of the largest endurance horse races held in Australia every year. Attracting a diversify range of riders (from competitive riders to the just starting out on a horse variety) choose from ride distances of 5km, 10km, 20km for beginners, 41km-61km for intermediate riders and 80km. Riders will race at speed for the first time on a new network of permanently marked horse trails our local Wingello State Forest. A fabulous weekend out for riders and those who like to watch and volunteer. **May 25 & 26, Wingello State Forest highlandsendurance.com** 🇦🇺



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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 \$60

& weekend \$70 includes

motorised cart hire. Clubs and additional carts available for hire.

Dress: Neat golf attire.

Hardest hole: 7th – par 4.

Difficult driving hole with narrow fairway that 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. See website for Stay and Play packages.

Contact: 4465 0200;

kangaroovalleygolf.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: \$45 for 18 holes.

\$25 for 9 holes. Clubs and carts available for hire.

Lessons: From \$60. Groups and clinics catered for.

Dress: Neat golf attire.

Hardest hole: 18th – 378m, par 4.

Dog leg hole turning left around a large gum tree 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 Sholz dinner Friday and Saturday or all week next door at Dormie House. Available for weddings and functions.

Contact: golf reservations 4868 1503 or 4868 1811

mossvalegolfclub.com.au

BOWRAL GOLF CLUB

18 holes – par 69

Kangaloon Road, Bowral

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

Professional: Kevin Kenny

Cost to play: Visitor 18 holes

\$45. Visitor \$50, twilight

\$28.50. Clubs and carts available to hire.

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

Lessons on demand.

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. Available for weddings.

Contact: 4861 1042;

bowralgolfclub.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 Highlands Winery. **Accommodation** available at Peppers Manor House, and a la carte food at Katers restaurant. See website for membership specials.

Contact: 4868 3200;

mtbroughton.com.au

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PEPPERS CRAIGIEBURN

9 holes – par 32

Centennial Road, Bowral

Open to the public seven days.

Cost to play: \$15 for 9 holes.

\$15 for club 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. Weddings, functions and conferences catered for. Luxury accommodation available at Peppers Craigieburn.

Contact: 4862 8000;

peppers.com.au/craigieburn

GIBRALTAR COUNTRY CLUB

18 holes – par 70

Boronia Street, Bowral

Open to the public seven days around competitions.

Bookings essential.

Cost to play: Weekday \$35 for 9 holes or \$45 for 18 holes with a cart; weekend \$45 or \$55

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 including children's menu at San Fior restaurant. Driving range and aqua range facilities available. Functions catered for. Available for weddings.

Contact: 4862 8645;

gibraltarbowl.com.au

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.

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. Wedding, accommodation and function facilities are available at the Sylvan Glen Country House. Consult website for stay and play packages.

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highlandsgolfclub.com.au



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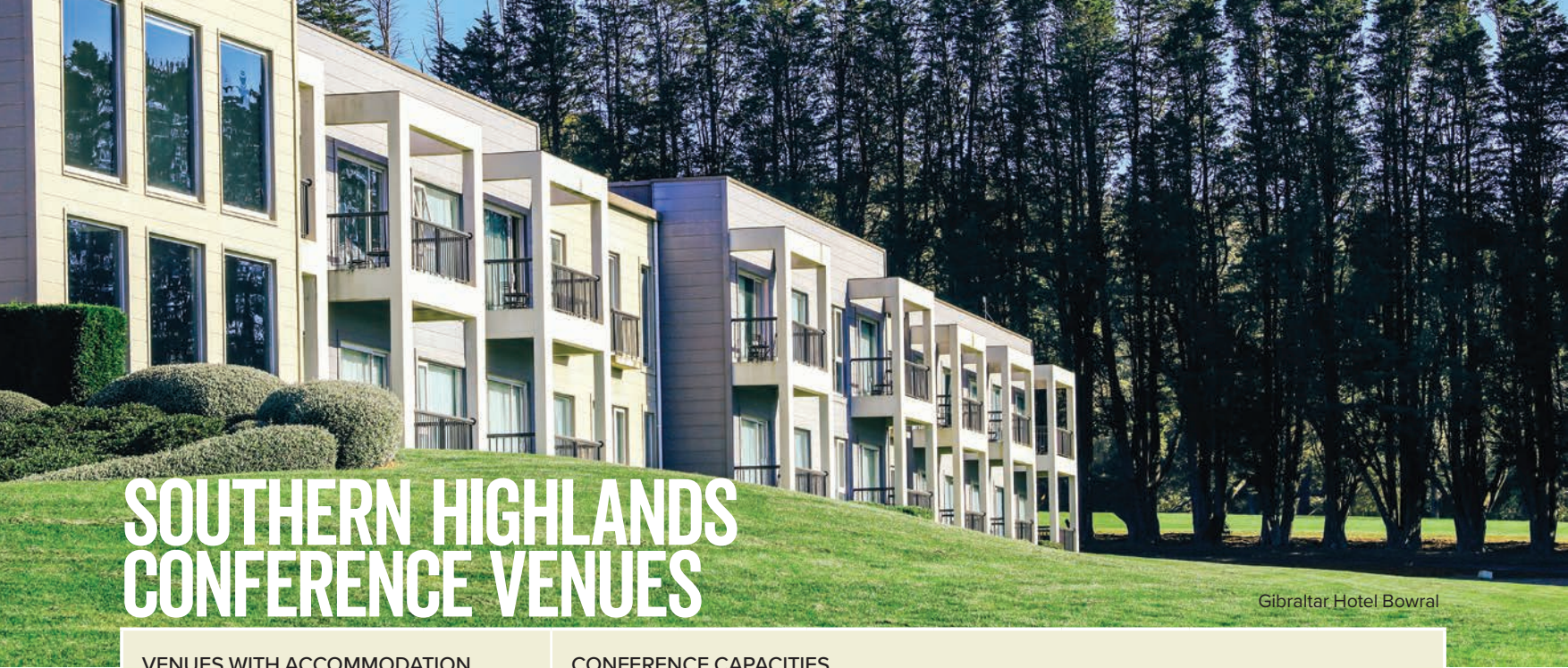


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Briars, Bowral	32	40	30	80	120	80	150	180
Bundanoon Country Inn Motel	21	24	36	60	60	60	60	60
Bundanoon Guest House	16	34	30	25	60	20	40	60
Dormie House, Moss Vale	32	40	30	60	120	45	90	140
Gibraltar Hotel Bowral	76	75	75	180	300	200	280	400
Killarney 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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Our great big love party

JESSICA BOLITHO AND JOEL SPITERI MARRIED AT VICTORIAN ERA PROPERTY SOMERLEY HOUSE IN SUTTON FOREST. WITH AUTUMN IN THE AIR, THE RAIN WAS A CONSTANT BUT WELCOME EXTRA GUEST. PHOTOGRAPHER ALEX OLGUIN FROM OLGUIN PHOTOGRAPHY WAS THERE TO CAPTURE THEIR JOYOUSLY WET DAY.

Jessica and Joel Spiteri met through music. Although now an insight analyst, at the time Joel was studying a Bachelor of Music (Education) in Sydney when he was set up by friends to attend a music concert where Jess was also expected. Jess arrived late (quite typically, laughs Joel) but upon seeing her face, he says he heard music. Literally and metaphorically.

'The first thing I ever saw of Jessica was her smile as she ran into the performance. She has a smile that lights up any room. I soon loved her carefree nature and the fact she is always up for an adventure.'

Jess soon felt the same for Joel: 'The first thing I found really attractive about Joel was his passion and drive for life. He's always got at least 10 life goals floating around and will actually put his head down, work hard and achieve them. I found it really infectious and we both encouraged each other to take huge life challenges. I went on and did postgrad studies and became a midwife, and Joel had an even bigger career change from being a high school music teacher to entering the music industry business.'

The couple live in Stamare, Sydney where Jessica is a registered nurse and midwife. But it was in the Southern Highlands that Joel walked with Jess to the top of Mount Gibraltar and proposed on one shaky knee. Then came an online search for their perfect wedding venue, which they found in the 1875 historic Somerley House near Sutton Forest.

'We were checking out a few wedding blogs online and saw a beautiful wedding at Somerley House,' explains Jess, 'so we contacted owner Nadine O'Brien.'

'As soon as we met her, it was almost as if Nadine was an old friend. She welcomed us in her gumboots and gave us homemade jam made from kumquats from the beautiful tree we used as a backdrop for a few of the photos. As we walked around the grounds hearing her speak about how much she loved the place, we fell in love with it instantly. It was the only venue we looked at.' ►





DETAILS

VENUE

Somerley House
somerleyhouse.com.au

BRIDE'S DRESS

Rue de Seine
ruedeseine.com

BRIDESMAIDS' DRESSES

Christy Dawn
christydawn.com

CATERING

Harry's on Green Lane
greenlanebowral.com

WEDDING CAKE

Joel's mum Leanne (so clever!)

CELEBRANT

Merinda Richardson
merindarichardson.com.au

PHOTOGRAPHER

Alex Olguin
olguinphotography.com.au

HAIR

Mae You Be
maeyoube.com.au

SHOES

Intentionally Blank for Jess,
R.M.s for Joel
intentionallyblank.us
rmwilliams.com.au



Joel agrees. 'The whole place, as well as Nadine and her partner, Seb, gave us an overall sense of calm and love, which suited our vibe perfectly. We loved how the beauty and grandness of the actual Somerley House was toned down by the leafy forests and slightly overgrown gardens. 'The reception was held in the Garden Room, which has beautiful high ceilings and is so effortlessly elegant.'

Marrying in the Highlands in autumn with its typical four seasons in one day has its challenges, but for Jess and Joel, the weather was all part of the charm.

'We both love everything autumn has to offer,' explains Joel. 'The colours are the most obvious beautiful thing but the hint of cool air is our idea of perfect. It's a season that reminds everyone of change and I think getting married is such a time of change, and it's nice to have that to reflect upon.'

As their big day approached, Jessica kept her eyes firmly on the weather forecast, determined to take whatever the heavens threw at them. And it delivered. 'Emerging from the forest and seeing each other in the wet setting was one of my favourite parts of the whole day,' says Jess. 'We didn't really adapt any plans for the weather. We embraced the day, and whatever hiccups it brought. Wet weather happened but I have no regrets about trudging through the mud to have our photos done, although my white dress ended up a lovely shade of beige!

'Both our photographer, Alex, and celebrant, Merinda, were brilliant in going along with it too. Luckily Merinda had a back-up as her iPad got so wet it stopped working halfway through the ceremony. But it just made the day that little bit more magic.'

Jessica and her bridesmaids spent the night before the wedding in the Somerleys guesthouse. Their morning stroll was a highlight: 'It was absolutely beautiful with the light rain and mist mixed in with the smoke from the fireplace.'

The couple had put a lot of thought into having the perfect wedding, and many of their 80 guests travelled significant distances to get there. 'Jess has family who came across from New Zealand, which made it really special,' says Joel. 'We also had friends and family fly in from Victoria and the Northern Territory. It was great to have everyone we love so dearly in the same room for the first time!' 'We just wanted everyone to feel relaxed, not to have it as a formal event but rather a big love party.'

They personalised the day with lots of DIY touches. 'Jess, her mum and her bridesmaids went to a flower farm on the way down from Sydney to pick up fresh flowers for making their own bouquets. It was something nice to do the night before the ceremony, to get everyone involved.

'And my mum did an amazing job making the wedding cake. A lot of blood, sweat and tears went into it, which made it feel really special and in tune with our vibe.'

Joel's grandfather was also involved: 'We spent a day potting the succulents for the wedding with Nonno and he tended them for the months leading up to the day.

'Our friend Frances, who keeps bees here in the Southern Highlands and in Sydney's inner west, put together little honey jars, which along with the succulents doubled as table place cards and gifts for our guests.'

Three of Joel's mates played jazz during the wedding dinner and into the night, and Joel surprised Jess with a performance of his own. 'During my speech I played an instrumental song for Jessica I had written the night before. I played it on the first little guitar I'd ever owned after I finished telling everyone that if I had never learnt to play the guitar, our paths probably would never have crossed.'

As Joel's fingers strummed, the rain beat down. But, says Jess, the unrelenting weather only made their special day more special. 'The rain got heavier and heavier throughout the ceremony, as you can see in the photos. I think that was hands down one of my favourite moments! It was just so fitting for us as a couple, and it helped everyone have a laugh and settle into the ceremony. 'And having Joel play on his first ever guitar was a very special moment for both of us.'

The wedding dinner consisted of share plates, which were passed up and down two long tables of loved ones. 'There was a moment I just sat back and watched everyone passing the food along like one big happy family, and it filled my heart with so much joy,' says Joel. Jess concurs. 'There was such a sense of really big love throughout the day and into the night, not just for both of us but for all our guests as well.'

The couple headed off to Tassie on a roadtrip for their honeymoon and the rain followed them the whole way. 'There was literally a massive flood in Hobart!' says Joel. 'It was beautiful!'





(Images: The Evoke Company).

Weddings & Events.



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Weddings Whichever Way

Looking for a wedding venue as unique as your love? Autumn is traditionally a quieter time of year for weddings in the Highlands so it's a perfect time to visit and do a reccie of these Southern Highlands wedding beauties, and make a booking. Here are just a few of the many Escape SH loves. Be still my beating heart.

Secluded Sanctuary THE SECRET GARDEN, WILDES MEADOW

It was 24 years ago when horticulturist Kathy Finigan began her own love affair with two hectares of land down a quiet country lane in beautiful Wildes Meadow. She called it The Secret Garden and since November 2017 it has also become a pretty special, still quite secret, cold climate garden in which to tie the marital knot. If you dream of getting married surrounded by blossoms with arbours dripping, or with autumn leaves falling, this is a seasonal garden with a difference. Couples can choose a garden ceremony with just drinks and wedding photos from an array of garden rooms: the

Wedding Gazebo, Marquee Lawn, Wisteria

Arbour, Rose Lawn, Birch Walk, Fountain Garden, Cherry Blossom Walk and Megan's Garden or go DIY reception on the lawn with a marquee.

Pets are welcome and, as the garden is flat and easily accessible, it's good for guests of all ages.

thesecretgarden.events

Perfect for: lovers of the seasons, DIY-ers, let's-get-married-but-skip-the-reception types



Let Love Grow GROWWILD, ALPINE

This petal of a place is a 11 hectare native flower farm on the northern side of the Highlands near Alpine. Owned and operated by the Stewarts, former primary school teacher Sue and husband Peter, who also grow native flowers for the Sydney market, GrowWild is a registered sanctuary with the Wildlife Land Trust. Marry anywhere in the beautiful settings on the property (beside the dam, in the marquee, in the rustic barn or in the secluded bush haven known as Secret Valley) and then up to 135 sit down guests can party away in the onsite marquee, with capacity to increase to up to 200 well wishers, including any four legged ones on leads. Sue and Peter can help recommend a caterer from their list of six favourites, and GrowWild offers a BYO option and an onsite cool room. The barn, which is equipped with a music system and is yours to decorate, also has a fully decked out Bridal Retreat with bathroom. Your own wedding property for two and a half days, arrive to set up Friday and leave Sunday after Saturday's wedding festivities. **growwild.com.au**

Perfect for: nature and bush fans, relaxed couples, those looking for a pet friendly venue, friends and family wanting to lend a hand

Spoilt for Charming Choice MALI BRAE FARM, MOSS VALE

Shelley and Greg Dark moved from Sydney after buying 1860 farm Mail Brae near Moss Vale and have created a stellar wedding venue that won them the Australian Small Business Association's National Champion Wedding Services Award in 2018. Well deserved, given this pretty 35 hectare property sits in a splendid private location with dams, a private jetty and six ceremony sites (Under the Gum Trees, the Old Ruins, the Fountain, the Poplar Walk, the Willows and the purpose built indoor Pavilion with its large open fireplace for wet or wintry Highlands weather, and more than enough room to swing a bride or two on the dancefloor). Mali Brae is a charming venue with dry stone walls, hills and garden sculptures, and caters for receptions of 100 seated guests or 120 for a cocktail do. It also does small scale intimate weddings for 30 to 55 guests too. Mali Brae chef Grace Buttigieg walks couples through their hearts' desires with food and beverage packages priced per head. In fact, Mali Brae is a bit of a one stop shop, offering future Mr & Mrs, Mr & Mr or Mrs & Mrs styling, floral services and accommodation options with two renovated historic cottages providing fabulous on site accommodation for six. Other great features include The Van, an up styled caravan bar that doubles as a photo booth for evening silly snaps, and a fabulous bar area. Fur babies very welcome for ceremonies and photos (but all guests with four legs need to be back at home by the time the reception kicks off). **malibraefarm.com.au**

Perfect for: chic privacy pairs, those in the market for one stop wedding venue shop with charm ►

Botanical Luxe

SOMERLEY HOUSE, SUTTON FOREST

Built in 1875, this beautiful Victorian mansion has seen its fair share of parties, first as a private home that reputedly entertained politicians (perhaps from neighbouring Hillview, which was built in 1882 as the summer home for NSW Governors), ambassadors and even opera sensation Dame Nellie Melba, Prime Minister Billy Hughes and the Duke of Edinburgh, and latterly as a wedding venue. Newish owner Nadine O'Brien lives onsite and cater for wedding couples wanting a swish individual affair in a magnificent country house and established gardens. The property contains a magical 100 year old wood and ceremony spaces include the circular lawn, the woodland, forest, meadow and stables, with seated receptions for up to 95 guests held in the Garden Room and sperry tent packages available for larger parties of up to 170. Wedding catering is done by the talented team at Harry's Green Lane in nearby Bowral with food and beverage packages priced per head. Somerley's also offers on site accommodation for up to six guests in the Pool House plus masses of stunning backdrops for photo opportunities such as the newly planted kitchen garden, the house as backdrop, the woods, the surrounding paddocks and the old stables. See Jess and Joel's autumn wedding on page 78 to get a feel for Somerley's vibe. somerleyhouse.com.au

Perfect for: artistically elegant couples looking for a bit of garden party botanical; history and architecture lovers

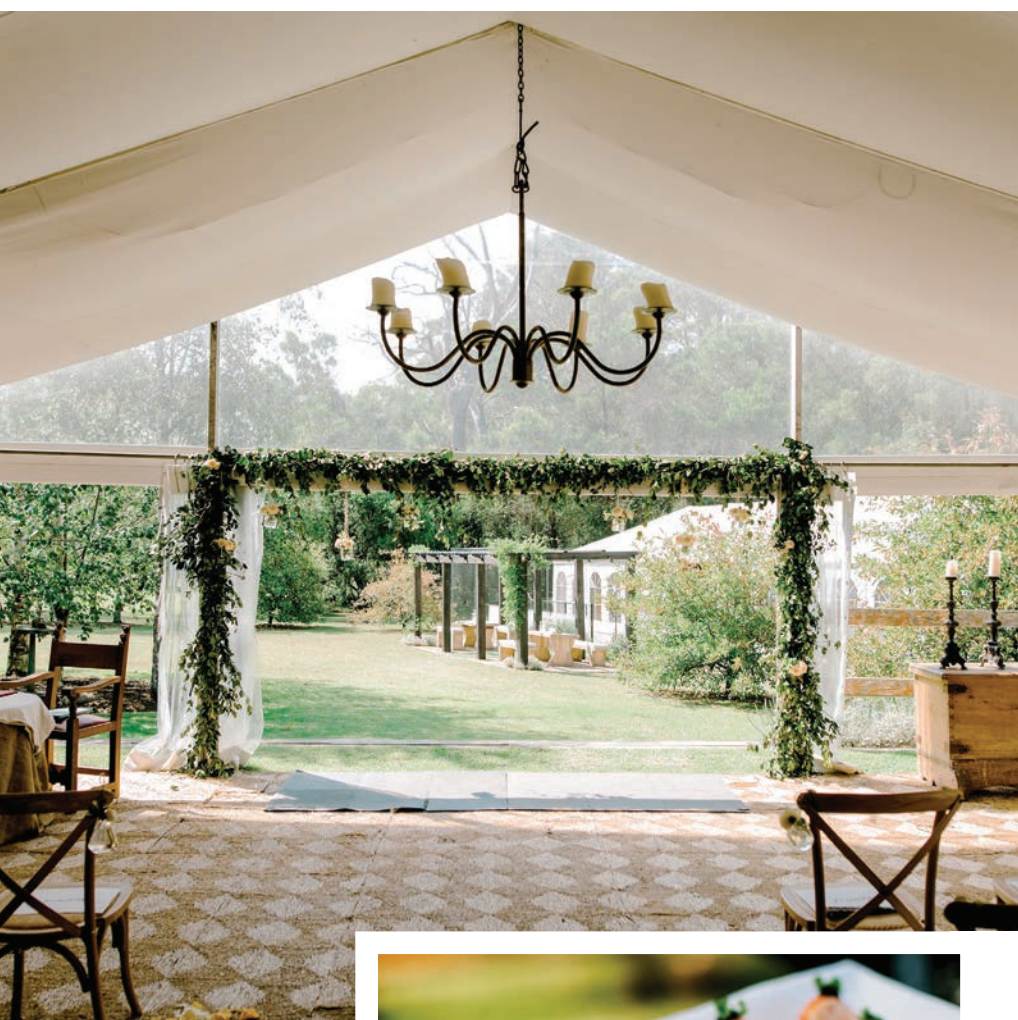


Brilliant Bestseller

BENDOOLEY ESTATE, BERRIMA

In need of a wedding that runs like bookwork? Bendooley Estate near Berrima, built on the success of the family book selling business, welcomed its latest wedding addition recently, the Stables, an architecturally designed, purpose built venue in Australian hardwood with seating for up to 180 reception guests. Couples can say I do nearby al fresco beforehand or inside. Not far away on the property, Bendooley's magnificent Book Barn can seat 250 guests, with all catering packages looked after by Bendooley's busy team of chefs expertly led by Benn Troy and wines from the estate's vineyard. Ceremonies can be held near the original home near the lake. If you want to keep all your guests in the one place, Bendooley also offers accommodation on site, including the original recently renovated Gatekeepers house and six newly added luxury cottages, each with its own bridal suite, an award winning cellar door and the book shop on site. Pet guests welcome with pick up and sleepovers organised at nearby Dogue Country Retreat in Berrima. bendooleyestate.com.au

Perfect for: couples in search of a relaxed wedding with chic glamour; bibliophiles, large weddings



Natural Beauty

WOMBAT HOLLOW, GLENQUARRY

This place is all about nature. Set in a natural amphitheatre of gum trees, the venue sits beautifully alone between Robertson and Glenquarry, not another building in sight. It has seven separate spaces for couples to choose from for their ceremony or reception, including a bush barn and a splendid outdoor marquee that seats up to 250 guest, and even capacity for helicopters to land. Food and beverage packages are available per head in collaboration with the Grand Bistro in nearby Bowral and there is lots of B&B accommodation available close by. Pets allowed as long as they are nice to the resident wombats. wombathollow.worldsecuresystems.com

Perfect for: those who enjoy life off the beaten track, couples with a love of the outdoors, sophisticated types wanting to arrive on their big day by helicopter

OTHER HIGHLANDS VENUES WE LOVE

Weddings in the Wilde, Fitzroy Falls Features: outdoor bush chapel, accommodation for 140, festival party feel under the stars weddingsinthewilde.com.au

Bowral Golf Club, Bowral Features: laid back Bowral gem with one of the loveliest views from the clubhouse venue out over the greens. bowralgolfclub.com.au

Robertson Hotel, Robertson Features: Original art deco venue with a Gatsby feel and accommodation for your entire wedding, complete with a bridal suite and sweeping staircase therobertsonhotel.com.au

Burrawang School of the Arts, Burrawang Features: Historic 1883 village hall with commercial grade kitchen, table settings for up to 140 and a stage for the band burrawangvillage.com

Retford Park, Bowral Features: Home of former press baron Sir James Fairfax, historic Bowral house set within lovely gardens caters for weddings of up to 80 people in glittering surrounds retford@nationaltrust.com.au

Zen Oasis, Berrima Features: unique vegetarian wedding option in woolshed with a chilled out vibe within rural Berrima countryside zen-oasis.com

Links House, Bowral Features: wedding newcomer in historic Bowral hotel offers bespoke affairs for four to 100 - can include ceremony, cocktail reception or full sit down banquets and exclusive use of the entire elegant hotel. linkshouse.com.au

Milton Park, Bowral Features: grand country house and hotel set in beautiful gardens, offers glamorous and very private weddings with Day Spa and option to marry on manicured lawns and dance the night away in ballroom with seating for up to 180 guests many of who can stay onsite miltonpark.com.au

Fitzroy Inn, Mittagong Features: beautiful 1836 Georgian colonial inn with rich history and original features including convict cell, large enough to host marquee wedding in lovely grounds or sit down reception in heritage dining room with accommodation in inn or nearby renovated stables fitzroyinn.com.au

ALSO DEFINITELY WORTH A PRE-WEDDING RECCIE:

Centennial Vineyards Restaurant, Bowral
centennialrestaurant.com.au

The Loch, Berrima theloch.net.au

Briars, Moss Vale briars.com.au

Southern Highlands Wines

southernhighlandswinery.com.au

Hopewood House, Bowral hopewoodhouse.com.au 

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DIGGING DEEP

WE SPOKE TO **FRIENDS OF THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS BOTANIC GARDENS** ABOUT THE SEED FOR THE **NEW BOTANIC GARDENS IN BOWRAL** AND HOW THE **\$25 MILLION PLUS PROJECT** IS GERMINATING.

Go to any major city or region around the world and you'll likely find botanic gardens as the horticultural and cultural centrepiece. Think New York's Botanical Gardens, London's Kew Gardens, Rio de Janeiro's Jardim Botânico, Sydney's Royal Botanical Gardens. Always beautiful, with rare and one of a kind plant life and displays, sprawling gardens and themed events, these public spaces are created to inspire and amaze. And we have the same hopes for the Southern Highlands' version, along with its visitors centre, explains Friend of the SHBG Lyn Collingridge.

When was the idea of a Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens first mooted and by whom?

The concept was first proposed by a group of local garden enthusiasts including our current board members Charlotte Webb and her husband, Chris Webb. The search for a suitable site took until 2010. The 15 hectare site, which sits on the corner of Old South Road and Kangaloon Road in East Bowral, was officially opened by then NSW Governor Marie Bashir in 2013 and the lease was signed with the Wingecarribee Council in June 2015.

How's it progressing?

Well it's a unique one because it is one of the few botanic gardens in Australia that is not funded by any government or council. It is a garden for the community and funded by the community. For this reason, it will take considerable time to raise the \$15 million needed to fully design and construct the garden. The visitors centre is also expected to cost approximately \$15 million. The sooner we can get funding, the sooner we will see our dream come true.

What is the grand vision for the gardens?

The design of the garden was done by Kate Cullity of Taylor Cullity Lethlean, who are award winning landscape architects from Adelaide. And John Wardle Architects won the competition we launched for the botanic gardens visitors centre. The garden will be a series of journeys through the landscapes and changing seasons of the cool climate Southern Highlands.

The design of the Town Garden, to be positioned near the new visitors centre, was inspired by the spontaneous and energetic paintings of local artistic statesman John Olsen, who also recently donated a beautiful sculpture to the gardens. This will include parterre hedging, ordered floral displays and an elevated Arbour Walk offering views into the parterre and beyond. ►

The Country Garden is likened to a spacious garden estate with an expansive lawn, long vistas and serpentine walks.

The Meadow is a generous central lawn held on both sides by curvaceous sweeps of garden beds filled with seasonal perennials and sub shrubs. A water rill runs alongside the eastern edge of the lawn, a magnet for children's play.

The Woodland Walk is filled with exotic trees, shrubs and ground covers that create a semi enclosed lush garden walk.

The design of the Regional Garden, which will include a fern garden, is inspired by Louisa Atkinson, a botanical artist and environmentalist who lived in the Southern Highlands in the mid 19th century (see page 93). The chain of ponds has a serpentine boardwalk weaving through layers of indigenous woodland vegetation, including rare and endangered species.

Who are the Friends of SHBG?

To date there are more than 350 active local households who are Friends of the Garden. Everyone is a volunteer, except for one part time employee, the development manager, whose major focus along with the SHBG board is to raise the funds to build the garden and visitors centre.

Friends of the Garden help with working bees at the garden twice monthly. They complete minor construction and maintenance work, and propagating and growing plants for sale is a major task for volunteers.

How are you fundraising?

Mostly from events at present. Last year we raised \$200,000 from fundraising events and we estimated that last year volunteers also donated another \$200,000 in manpower. Generous local businesses also support by providing mulch, donating potting mix and fertiliser, giving discounted prices on skilled labour and so on. And Probus and Rotary are local community groups actively supporting us, along with many local garden clubs.

Another important source of income is grants. We are very active in submitting grant applications but at the rate of our funding to date, it will take a lifetime to complete the gardens so we are also actively working on other strategies to raise the necessary funds.

Recently, with the help of celebrity landscape gardener Charlie Albone, we launched an appeal for the Education Centre, to try and raise \$500,000 to build it, although that cost doesn't include the fit out. We are reaching out to the community for help and support.

To date how many species of plants there?

About 500. These comprise 23 species of birch and 21 species of box, both of which have been registered on the National Plant Collections Register. In addition there are three types of crepe myrtle and 56 trees, including eucalypts, oaks, tulip, crab apples, birch, maples, ash, dogwood, elm, ginkgo, nyssa, horst chestnut, chinese pistachio, tortured hazel, dwarf birch. There are also six types of hedging and lots of perennials.



How will the garden aim to share its botanical knowledge?

The two major purposes of the garden are recreational and educational, for both adults and children. Our children's education program has been kick started by a number of local schools, such as Bowral High and the Steiner School. Looking forward, our children's education program will provide learning in subjects such as biology, mathematics, art, photography, drama, environmental issues, climate and much more.

Our adult education program, which presently encompasses propagation of plants, nurturing plants, and plant health and maintenance, will be expanded to include information sessions on endangered and threatened species, some of which will be planted in our native garden. The garden is for the whole community to enjoy.

What will the SHBG bring to the region?

We really believe the gardens will become a major tourist attraction in the Southern Highlands and we estimate that, once fully constructed, will attract around 85,000 visitors each year. The gardens will also be a major venue for temporary and permanent sculpture exhibitions, and will be a centre for community events.

Careful number crunching has also shown the SHBG will bring significant economic benefits to the region, with the potential to deliver around 140 additional jobs and more than \$300 million over the next 15 years. The gardens will be a huge green space and one of the largest public parks in the Highlands, that will bring social, health and recreational benefits. shbg.com.au



Vessels of Change by Heidi McGeoch

Who was LOUISA ATKINSON?

Louisa Atkinson was an artist, author and a botanist. She was born in 1834 at historic property Oldbury in Sutton Forest, the site of SHBG's recent launch for its Education Centre appeal.

Louisa was reputedly the first born Australian female novelist, a noted naturalist and illustrator, naturalist, ecologist, and one of our earliest female journalists. She was also one of the first Australian writers to illustrate her own work.

Her novels, including *Gertrude the Emigrant* are among the first works to depict the lives of ordinary Australians, and her botanical finds were praised by eminent botanists. Several plants were named after her.

Louisa's granddaughter Janet Cosh grew up in Moss Vale and was also a recognised botanist and historian, who helped establish the Berrima District Historical Society in 1960. After her death in 1989, Janet's botanical records, drawings, watercolours and specimen collections were bequeathed to the University of Wollongong, where the Janet Cosh Herbarium was created in her honour. Fitzroy Falls Visitors Centre named the Janet Cosh Room to honour the legacy of this quiet and unassuming woman who did much to advance local history and the district's botanical record, and who followed in some of the steps of her grandmother, Louisa Atkinson. Much of Louisa Atkinson's work is in the State Library of NSW.



Image: State Library NSW

Get involved with SHBG in 2019

Earth Hour, March 30: be part of an attempt to set a record for the number of solar lanterns forming a footprint. Sign your 4-10 year old for Lantern Making workshops with talented local artist Heidi McGeogh from 5.30pm-9.30pm \$5 per child

Plant Fair & Open Garden Weekend, April 27 & 28

(see our full story on Open Gardens page 96)

Botanic Gardens Australia & NZ Open Day, Sunday May 26: free event – bring your family, picnic rug and basket and enjoy the live music

Kite flying: learn to make a kite and fly it on a date to be announced

Become a Friend: the SHBG is on the lookout for new Friends of the Garden, and for philanthropists and mum and dad investors wanting to lend a hand in the building of the Education Centre, estimated to cost approximately \$500,000. For more information and for more event information go to shbg.com.au



Red Cow Farm *a garden for all seasons*

2-5 hectares and 22 garden rooms
brimming with imaginative flair,
romance and beauty.

Open 10am to 4pm daily from mid September to mid May each year.

LOCATION

7480 Illawarra Highway,
Sutton Forest NSW 2577
5kms south of Moss Vale

PARKING

Car and coach parking in
Red Cow Lane adjacent
to the garden.



Red Cow Farm
GARDEN

GARDEN • DESIGN • NURSERY • GIFT SHOP

02 4868 1842 • info@redcowfarm.com.au • redcowfarm.com.au



 **Antiques**

"Purveyors of Old Wares"

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www.lancelothillantiques.com
enquiries@lancelothillantiques.com
 [@lancelot_hill_antiques](https://www.instagram.com/lancelot_hill_antiques)





INSTA
STAR

My name is KIM OLIVER

My life in five words is... Family, friends, fun, decorating and happiness. **I moved to the Southern Highlands in...** 2014 because life doesn't always go to plan and I needed a new one. **I love the Highlands because...** of the four seasons. The trees, the beauty and fresh air nurture my soul. And the wonderful people and social life! **My favourite things to do in the Southern Highlands...** Looking at houses, renovating houses, decorating houses and eating my way around the Highlands. **Followers on my Instagram page see images of...** interior design how-to. I share all my ideas on my Insta page. **When it comes to property and selling it, this is one truth I know...** People fall in love with a beautifully decorated space. Even the least attractive homes can be made to look far more appealing with the right furnishings. **The one thing I immediately do with any property I am styling is...** Remove the clutter, then get the placement of the furniture correct. **My philosophy to successfully styling a property is...** With better styling, buyers will not only see your home as more attractive but also as more valuable. A stylist can enhance the key features of your home. I create the vision so people can see themselves living in your home. **The most precious piece of advice I have ever received...** Kill them with kindness. **When it comes to styling a home...** You can never have enough plants and flowers. A little trick I like is to use quality fake flowers mixed with some real ones from your garden. And add your own personality to a room with interesting and different items. **For an immediate style facelift...** Find the focal point then design the room around that. It may be a fire place, the view or a piece of furniture. And every room needs a little black, it adds some drama! **When in the Highlands I always take visitors to...** Bendooley Estate, Milton Park, Mount Ashby Estate and for a walk along the Bong Bong bike track by the river at Moss Vale. Also a visit to Magpies at Berrima. **My secret shopping spots in the Highlands...** Garage sales, goodwill shops and the side of the road. Some of my best styling treasures come from someone else's trash. It's about creating the look you want to achieve, not about the labels. **The biggest goal I hope to achieve is...** to stop people decorating their whole room based around the TV. So many homes I see with magnificent views have all the furniture facing a white wall with their back to the outside. On a personal note, my next project is to help elderly people who are lonely find company. **When it comes to my own home, I never...** stay put. As soon as I have decorated and renovated, I move on to the next one. **A house is never a home until...** It tells the story of who you are and is a collection of what you love. 🏡

KIM OLIVER IS A DECORATOR AND PROPERTY STYLIST WHO HELPS HIGHLANDS HOUSE SELLERS GET TOP PRICE. WHEN IT COMES TO MOVING A PROPERTY QUICKLY FOR THE PRICE YOU ARE AFTER, KIM TELLS ESH IT'S ALL ABOUT INDIVIDUALITY, MAKING THE MOST OF WHAT YOU HAVE AND INVITING AN EXPERT IN TO WORK THEIR MAGIC.

 @insideroom





LEFT Retford Park ABOVE Gowan Brae

HIGHLANDS HUES

THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS IS PRETTY UNIQUE AS A REGION ABLE TO MARK THE TURNING OF THE SEASONS SO DISTINCTLY. VISIT SOME OF THESE BLOOMING BEAUTIES OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TO SEE THE AUTUMN ARRIVE AND THE LEAVES TURN.

Southern Highlands Autumn Open Gardens & Plant Fair Weekend, Bowral

Take the rare chance to explore some of the Highlands' most magnificent gardens and take home some of your own hard to find plants. Now in its ninth year and with all funds raised going towards the ongoing realisation of the dream to construct the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens and Visitors Centre, the Autumn Open Gardens includes Bowral gardens Bangala and Timbarra, both with mature gardens, Gowan Brae, renowned for its perennials and roses, and Wirreanda with its beautiful two acre gardens with lovely views over countryside. Historic house and vineyard Rotherwood is also open at nearby Sutton Forest.

After you've meandered through these gardens that aren't usually open to the public, head back to the site of the new Botanic Gardens in Bowral for this year's Plant Fair, which has more stall holders than ever, including specialist nurseries, garden designers, box hedging experts, garden sculptures and garden tour providers and lots of clever locals including artists Penny Simons and Bella Stanton and their Gathered & Made stall selling Bella's fresh wild flowers and Penny's willow obelisks and garden gates. There will also be plants on sale by the SHBG plant growers group.

Entry is \$10 per garden or \$35 for five. SHBG is at cnr Old South & Kangaloon roads in Bowral; entry to Plant Fair is \$10. No dogs please. Saturday & Sunday, April 27 & 28, 9am-4pm shbg.com.au

Retford Park, Bowral

James Fairfax, newspaper baron and philanthropist, lived at Retford Park for nearly 40 years, and before his death in 2017 bequeathed his beautiful property to the National Trust for the community to enjoy. The National Trust and manager Scott Pollock continue to do a stellar job of making Mr Fairfax's wishes a reality and will open these rare and lovely gardens again in autumn.

Take a gentle wander through Retford Park's arboretum of very old and very rare evergreen and deciduous trees, and look longingly at the stunning outdoor swimming pool and pool house designed by acclaimed Melbourne architect Guilford Bell. Light refreshments will be available for sale or pack a picnic and languish a lovely autumn's afternoon away. **Adults \$15, concession \$10, family \$35, National Trust members free. April 6 & 7 and May 5 & 6, 10am-3pm House tours are also available on the Open Gardens weekend in May (bookings essential).**

**1325 Old South Road, Bowral
nationaltrust.org.au/places/retford-park**

Red Cow Farm, Sutton Forest

A charming and unexpected beauty, Red Cow Farm was created out of 6 acres of paddock over 30 years by owners Ali Mentesh and Wayne Morrissey, and designed as a series of 20 garden rooms. Walk this beautiful garden and enjoy a woodland and beech walk, abbess's garden, lake, rose garden and much more. Buy local produce in the cottage shop to take away and chat to the farm's very friendly border collies. No other dogs please and no picnics.

Adults \$10, concessions & groups \$8, children 4-14 \$4 Open 10am-4pm every day until May 19.

**7480 Illawarra Highway, Sutton Forest
redcowfarm.com.au**

Milton Park Country House Autumn Open Gardens

These beautiful gardens are among the finest, designed and constructed by Mary Bullmore in the 1930s in the philosophy of the English School of Landscape, which did away with strict geometric construct. The beautiful gardens that house the fine hotel, built in 1911 by Bullmore's husband, Anthony Hordern, contain a treasure of horticultural gems including octogenarian elms and weeping beeches, 400 rose bushes, 2000 metres of hedges and a bluebell wood. **April 23-30 9.30am-4pm (although garden visits available outside this period by appointment). Adult \$7 Concession \$5 Children 12 & under Gold coin donation. Guided garden Tours are available at \$15 per person (minimum five people) between Monday 10am and Friday 4pm. Booking essential. All proceeds of Open Garden Days are donated to Bowral Hospital Auxiliary. miltonpark.com.au**

The Vale, Penrose

Only in its third year of opening to the public, The Vale at Penrose is another hidden beauty. Situated next to the Penrose State Forest, this property is home to mature oak trees and maples that give a stunning autumnal display. The garden is also underplanted with narcissus, azalea, rhododendron, daphne and a huge number of roses. But the crowning jewel is the Tasmanian rainforest: 20 specimens of native man ferns, believed to have a combined age of more than 2000 years' growth.

Adults \$10, concession \$8, children under 12 free. Dogs on leashes welcome. No picnics please. Saturday April 27, 10am-4pm. 80 Kareela Road, Penrose. Contact at federico.solchi@gmail.com or on 0411 796 315

Chinoiserie, Mittagong

A beautiful garden owned by Chris Styles and Dominic Wong, peony expert. A fusion of European and Chinese design the garden is separated into areas and has more than 120 varieties of peonies and 1000 varieties of perennials, shrubs and ornamental trees. **Open Easter long weekend April 19-22 10am-4.30pm. Entry \$7pp. 23 Webb Street, Mittagong chinoiserie.com**



Perennial Hill, Mittagong

This beautiful hillside garden was established in 2001 by local horticulturists Julie and Craig Hulbert, who were inspired by UK gardens Bluebell Cottage Garden in Cheshire and Great Dixter in East Sussex. It contains collections of conifers, woodlands and borders with lovely perennials. Also home to some rare plants. **Open each weekend in March and Easter weekend (April 19-22), 10am-4pm, Adults \$8, concession \$7, children 16 and under free. perennialhill.com.au**

Gardenalia, Robertson

Lovely village garden spread over one acre with more than 500 pots and unusual plants set amid water gardens, statues, gardenalia and trees, including 40 year old wisteria, weeping Japanese maples, cyclamens, herbs and natives. **March 30 & 31, 10am – 4pm Entry \$10, supporting Diabetes NSW 2 May Street Robertson, gardenalia.com.au**

And after browsing all the gardens, why not enjoy an al fresco afternoon High Tea in The Orangerie, Milton Park or outside at lovely Peppers Manor House, Sutton Forest or book ahead and order one of Peppers picnic hampers and find a spot in the lovely gardens to laze the afternoon away. Hampers include seasonal produce and meats with antipasto, bread, dips and sweet treats. For more information on High Teas or Hampers call Milton Park 02 4861 8100 or Peppers Manor House 02 4860 3111

See the leaves turn

THE CARRIAGE HOUSE COUNTRY MANOR, BOWRAL

A privately owned 11 bedroom luxury retreat able to sleep 22 and featured as our cover shot this issue, admire The Carriage House Country Manor's spectacular autumnal gates on Horderns Road, Bowral or willowsauvergnecountryhouses.com

CHERRY TREE WALK, BOWRAL

Home to the Vietnam War memorial, this wide pathway perfect for strolling or bike riding is lined with 526 cherry trees, one for each local young Australian who gave their life during that conflict. This walk is also stunning in spring.

RETFORD PARK, BOWRAL

A collection of rare evergreen and deciduous trees set within a fine and established garden with layers of garden design, and a well-planted park. Rare highlights include century old oaks the old bunya pine in the forefront of the pink Victorian Italianate styled house. Other treasures include the Laurel Lawn with its perennial flowering borders and garden sculptures by famed Australian artists such as Donald Friend nationaltrust.org.au/places/retford-park

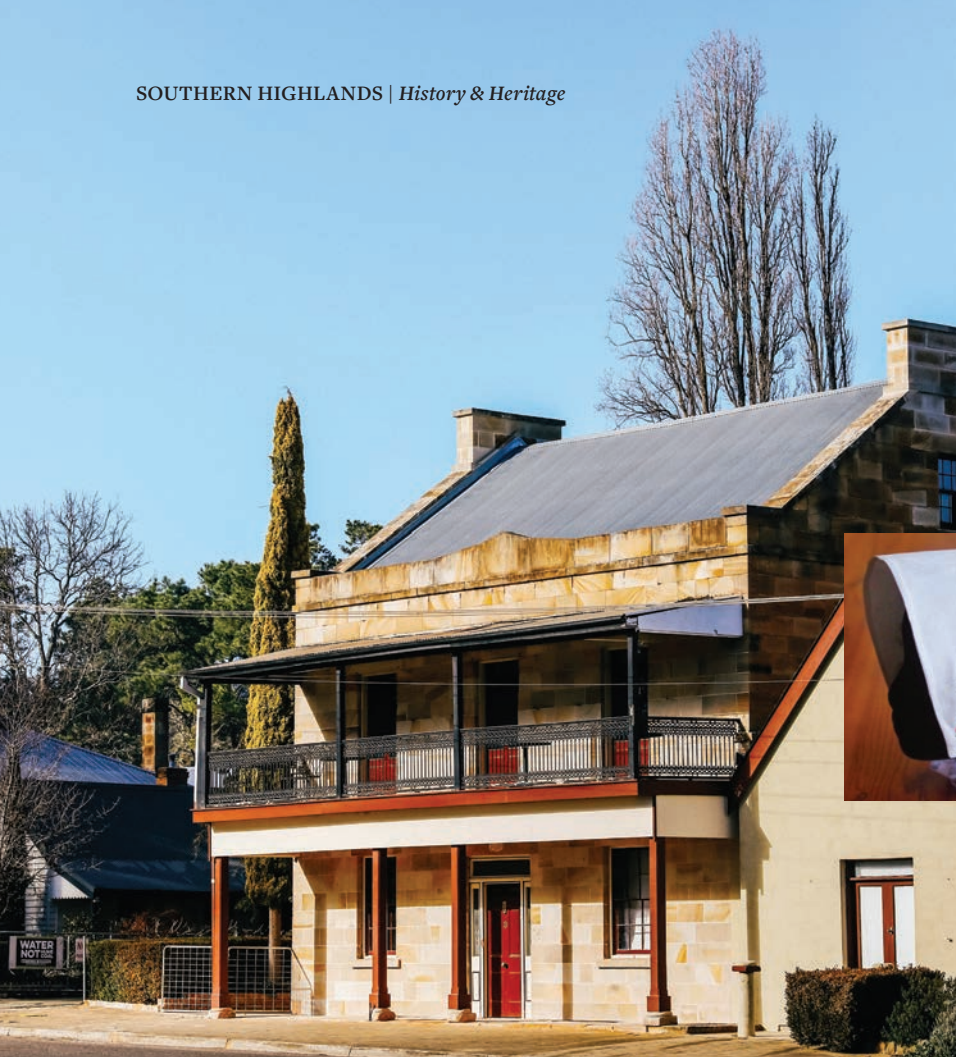
MINIATURE ROSE SHOW

CATCH THE DAINITY OF DAINTIEST CHAMPION MINIATURE ROSES (ROSES WITH FLOWERS LESS THAN 5CM ACROSS AND BUSHES NO MORE THAN 50CM TALL) AND THEIR CLEVER GROWERS. MARCH 16 12PM-5PM. MARCH 17 10AM-4PM, MITTAGONG RSL.NSW.ROSE.ORG.AU

GARDEN
CLINIC

WELBY GARDEN CENTRE AUTUMN GARDEN CLASS

Get yourself along to the terrific Welby Garden Centre and get a heads up on what to do this season in this class held by Garden Clinic. Lots of ideas on what flowers and veg to plant and what jobs need doing. There's even coffee and cake. **Sunday April 11, 11am-1pm, \$65pp (bookings essential) Welby Garden Centre, cnr Old Hume Highway & Bendooley Street, Welbygardenclinic.com.au**



STEP BACK IN TIME

HISTORICAL INTRIGUE,
CONVICT CONNECTIONS AND
ARCHITECTURAL BUILDINGS
FROM THE COLONIAL GEORGIAN
AND VICTORIAN ERAS... **IF YOU
ARE A BIT OF A HISTORY AND
HERITAGE HUNTER YOU'RE IN
FOR A TREAT THIS AUTUMN.**
CHECK OUT THESE HIGHLANDS
EVENTS AND GET DISCOVERING.

Convict Ancestry Heritage Festival, Harper's Mansion, Berrima

Harper's Mansion, the lovely Georgian building that overlooks Berrima, was built by Australian born James Harper and his freed convict wife Mary in 1834 and is now run by a dedicated local team for The National Trust. This autumn the important building will be the site of a heritage festival among the acres of English gardens, heritage roses and one of the largest hedge mazes in the Southern Highlands, and visitors will be encouraged to commemorate any convict ancestors on the convict tree. There will also be a display of convict bonnets, lent by the local chapter of the Fellowship of First Fleeters, as well as convict bricks, leg irons and clay pipes, and the stories of convicts and ex convicts who established themselves in the Berrima area. To tie in with the inaugural Irish Heritage Festival (see right), Harper's Mansion will also highlight the exploits of Irish locals such as publicans Michael Doyle and Bryan McMahon, storekeeper James Jerome Higgins, the McCurdy family and several others who came from the Emerald Isle to begin life in the new colony.

**Saturdays and Sundays, April 13-May 19, 10.30am-4pm.
Adults \$10, concession \$8, children Free. 9 Wilkinson
Street, Berrima; harpersmansion.com.au**

Irish Festival, Berrima Public School, Berrima

Second only in numbers to the English, many Irish convicts and free settlers came to Australia, whether by force or free choice, and made their homes in the Southern Highlands. The inaugural Irish Festival in the Highlands, organised by Berrima local and history aficionado Rosalind Dale, celebrates the cultural and artistic contribution of these Irish settlers to our society, and will assist people wanting to discover more about their Irish ancestral roots. The event will include Irish music and food, poetry recitations of famous works and Irish food such as soda bread and jams thanks to local providore Mrs. Oldbucks. There will also be the essential Guinness on tap and music at the Surveyor General Inn. Sure to be a craic for one and all.

**April 13, 10am-3pm. Berrima Public School; for
more information call 0401 065 077.**

Brigadoon Bundanoon Highland Gathering, Bundanoon

Now in its 41st year, Brigadoon is the biggest celebration and meeting of folk with Scottish origins in the Southern Hemisphere. For fans of kilts, caber tossing Scots, pipe bands, ceilidhs, tartan and clans, this is one outing not to miss. This year's Chieftain of the Games is NSW Governor David Hurley, who will open the games after a mass street parade through charming historic Bundanoon to the town's oval. There will follow a plethora of joyous performances, including a massed pipes and drums display with more than 20 pipe bands (among them the local Oxley College Pipe Band), Scottish dancing displays, the Bonnie Bairns competition, whisky tastings, fiddlers bands, the kilted dash, children's games and of course the obligatory and very popular Australian Highland Heavy Weight Championship featuring traditional Scottish games ►

A BUTCHER

A BAKER

a bunch of
Makers

*Celebrating Makers
& Artisans of the
Southern Highlands*

*In this first exhibition in our region's new digital gallery,
hear artisans tell their stories in their own words,
bringing to life their passion for making with captivating
photography and artwork lovingly made by hand.*

10am-4pm

**WEDNESDAY TO SUNDAY &
EVERY DAY OF SCHOOL HOLIDAYS**



THE
Story Centre **in HD**
BERRIMA DISTRICT MUSEUM
BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.


thestorycentre.com.au



Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc, Berrima

No fact finding family mission to the Highlands is complete without a visit to this terrific resource. Now completely revamped as the Highlands' first digital gallery and with the exhibition 'A Butcher, A Baker, A Bunch of Makers' currently underway, this gem of a museum founded in 1960 is the permanent archive for heritage material pertaining to people and places in the Highlands, including more than 8000 historic images. An extensive collection of information is available for researchers looking into family history and for those wanting to look back in time. **Wednesdays to Sundays, 10am-4pm. Adults \$7, children free. The Story Centre Museum, Market Place, Berrima; berrimadistricthistoricalsociety.org.au**

Heritage Trail, Destination Southern Highlands, Mittagong

Want to get an overall feel of the Highlands' history and heritage? Then make Destination Southern Highlands Welcome Centre at Mittagong your first port of call, talk to the knowledgeable staff there, then download the local tourism body's excellent resource the Heritage Trail, and get discovering. southern-highlands.com.au 

events such as the caber toss, hammer throw and stone putt. You'll also see the Tartan Warriors lift the Bundanoon Stones made from local Bundanoon sandstone. Visit more than 100 stalls, including 30 clan information stalls to discover your Scottish roots. Celebrations continue into the evening with a ceilidh knees up. Street parade starts at 9am. **Saturday April 6 from 9am. Adults \$20, concession \$18, children 5-17 \$10, family \$50. Bundanoon Oval, Bundanoon Road; brigadoon.org.au**

Made in Australia Festival, Retford Park, Bowral

Fancy getting a piece of your Australiana valued? Forty years ago the landmark Antiques Australia First Fleet to Federation exhibition was curated in Sydney as the first to showcase Australian colonial decorative arts from public and private collections. The National Trust's Retford Park is now reviving the exhibition, which will be run alongside a panel of experts on hand to assess your pieces of Australiana, including furniture, metalwork, ceramics, books, ephemera, memorabilia, juvenilia and vintage clothing, for two appraisal sessions on each day. Supporters of the Southern Highlands Regional Gallery, to be constructed in the Retford Park's old dairy, will also be exhibiting. Ticket price includes garden admission and the appraisal of three items. **May 11 & 12, 10am – 4pm. Adults \$15, concession \$10, family \$35. 1325 Old South Road, Bowral; nationaltrust.org.au/places/retford-park**



SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS markets

Love unearthing locally made and grown produce and delights? Then look no further. The regular markets held in our villages and towns across the Highlands are a great way to gain real insight into the creative and growing side of the region, and to find yourself some unique and delicious goodies. Whether you are in search of fresh produce, home furnishings, art, plants or fashion, you'll find everything you are looking for and more. Happy shopping! For further information and details, see southern-highlands.com.au

MITTAGONG MARKETS

**Third and fifth Saturday 8am-2pm
cnr Albert and Alice streets, Mittagong**

Held in the grounds of the Uniting Church, this market features plants, collectables, fresh produce, children's toys and clothing, as well as handcrafted goods, jewellery, and items for the mind, body and spirit. Stallholders include Stones Patisserie, Jack's Country Honey, Meeko Beauty, Lake Duck Food and Roberson Potatoes Hill Family Farming. Details 0424 095 196

Bowral Public School Markets

Second Saturday of the month 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 including locals Bulwarra Bees, Cuttaway Creek, Berrycilious, Dunnollie Rare & Heritage Poultry, Kookabura Skincare, Billy Chan's Dumplings & Sutton Forest Oliver Company. Details enquire@bowralpsmarket.com bowralpsmarket.com

RAILWAY STREET FARMERS MARKET

**Thursdays 3.30pm-5.30pmish depending on weather
Old Bowling Club Green, Railway Street, Moss Vale**

This popular produce market now in its third year takes place at the old Bowling Club in Moss Vale's Spring Street and boasts everything from fresh seasonal vegetables, eggs, fish, bread, quiches and pies, jams and pickles, and fresh cuts of beef, to compost, plants and seedlings. Get along to see some of the best homegrown produce in the area including Phil Lavers award winning veg from Moonacres Farm, Pigs Fly Cider, Tractorless Vineyards, Moss Vale Community Gardens, Prestige Oyster & Prawns. Details 0468331738

ROBERTSON MARKETS

**Second Sunday of the month 9am-2pm
(except January) Hoddle Street, Robertson**

A variety of stalls, food and refreshments at the School of Arts in the busy, engaged community of Robertson. Great trash and treasure finds and, of course, lots of local produce, including famed Robbo potatoes. Details 0408 238 875

EXETER VILLAGE MARKET

**First Saturday of the month
9am-1.30pm. Exeter Village Hall
and Oval, Exeter Road, Exeter**

Held at the local hall beside the community oval in Exeter. With 45 stalls including eight new ones enjoy the high quality wares from local producers, artisans, foodies and local craftspeople including (but certainly not all) such as Lady Bucket's Kitchen, Black Hen Kitchen, Denmar Olives, Bungonia Creek Wines, Willobar Designs, Belisa Cashmere, Driven By Fabri and many more. There's also a fabulous playground for the kids within the oval picket fences. Details 0419 808 022 info@exetervillagemarket.com exetervillagemarket.com

CROP-SWAP

Saturday 9.30am-10.30am

Robertson Bowling Club, Hoddle Street, Robertson

Bring your excess veg, fruit, magazines, empty or full jam jars, egg, egg cartons, or plants along to this great community healthy living initiative and swap with other local green thumbs, gardeners, Robbo folk for whatever it is on offer and or in season in other people's gardens. All welcome but please be aware excess produce is swapped. No money exchanges hands. A lovely chance to sit down and meet more of the local community while you enjoy a egg bacon and sausage in a bun or a coffee or a cuppa if you fancy.

Berrima Schoolyard Market

**Fourth Sunday of the month 9am-2pm (except January)
and second Sunday in December. Oxley Street, Berrima**

50 stalls with everything from fresh local produce including fresh produce grown in the school's veggie garden to artisanal wares, gourmet goodies for the pantry or as a great gift, plus plenty to keep the kids entertained, including a jumping castle and live music, and the fabulous Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Cafe and a BBQ run by dedicated Berrima Mums and Dads. Details 0488 004 421 or info@theschoolyardmarkets.com.au

Colo Vale Community Markets

**First Saturday of the month 8.30am-1.30pm
(except January) Colo Vale Village 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. Held in the Community Hall, stock up with freshly grown produce from Jack's Eggs & Honey, Lilly's Olives, and handmade treasures from the Colo Vale Community Association Craft Table. BBQ on the go from breakfast til lunch. And don't miss Colo Vale's annual Monster Garage Sale on Saturday March 18 8am-1pm. Details of markets 4889 4129 Details of Monster Garage Sale 0414 833 077

MOSS VALE COMMUNITY MARKETS

**Fourth Saturday of every month 8am-1pm
(except January) Moss Vale Showground,
Illawarra Highway, Moss Vale**

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. markets@mossvaleshow.com.au

BUNDANOON MAKERS MARKET

**First and Third Sunday of the month 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, Lebanese take home meals, hot Indian dishes, Japanese pancakes, honey and eggs, cakes, pies and melting moments all make this market well worth the scenic drive to Bundanoon. Details 0411 297 963

ARTS FOR ALL

THERE'S AN ABUNDANCE OF CREATIVITY TO HARVEST IN THE HIGHLANDS THIS AUTUMN. BELOW ARE JUST A FEW OF OUR GALLERIES WHERE YOU CAN GET SOMETHING NEW FOR YOUR WALL, PERSON OR GARDEN AND REAP WHAT OUR CLEVER ARTISTS AND CURATORS ARE BUSY SOWING.

Words **Amanda Mackevicius**



BDAS
Savanna
Caravan



Sturt Gallery, Punu – Living Wood

The Milk Factory Gallery and Exhibition Space

Sydney artist Dana Dion's love of the Australian bush and sea, vegetation, sounds and smells is expressed through her large, abstracted landscapes showcased in the main gallery of this former milk factory from April 27 to May 27. 'I take experiences out in nature back to my studio and paint large,' says Dana. 'I use a lot of paint. I make a mess. I am very physical when I work, moving energetically.' Also recent and new works by Mudgee based artist Denise Faulkner will feature in the adjacent Pop Up Gallery from April 18 to May 13. Working in watercolour on paper, Denise's work is imbued with a gentle humour often depicting a curious combination of native birds and fine china. Meanwhile, the Milk Gallery shop has a huge range of original art and objects, glass, sculpture, fine woodwork, jewellery and ceramics for sale. The tiny white ceramic dogs (and dog bowls) are particularly adorable, as are the hand carved Australian animals and birds by fine wood worker Ian Bell. **Open seven days, 10am-5pm, 33 Station Street, Bowral; milkfactorygallery.com.au**

Bowral Art Gallery & BDAS

A charming venue for art classes, competitions and exhibitions, the Bowral Gallery makes a vital contribution to the vibrant cultural life of our community. The gallery will host six exhibitions during autumn, including popular annual competitions with most artworks for sale. The Bowral Sculpture Prize exhibition opens on March 8 at 6.30pm and runs until March 24. Artworks by BDAS's diversely talented art tutors make up the eponymous Tutors' Exhibition from April 20 to 28. While the Wingecarribee Landscape Prize exhibition runs from May 18 to 26. To enter any competition, head to the BDAS website. There's also a special exhibition of beautiful wearable treasures featuring antique and rare beads, gemstones and jewellery artifacts, curated and created by the well travelled Robertson artist Savanna Caravan, from March 28 to April 2. And photographer Jenny Hawkins shares her work in 'Around the World in 80 Frames' from May 2 to 6. The Picton Art Group is holding an exhibition of work titled 'Diversity V' from April 10 to 16. **1 Short Street, Bowral; bdasgallery.com**

Retford Park, Bowral

The cottage gallery in the stunning grounds of Italianate mansion Retford Park, bequeathed to the National Trust by the late James Fairfax, has many exciting events and exhibitions planned for 2019. On the Wall is a special collection of paintings and prints created by participants in the Lifeforce Centre for Learning art programs run locally for people with disabilities. Young local artist Tallulah McCord will exhibit her latest works along with several other creatives. Tallulah paints with a free expressive style in a bright palette of colours and her last exhibition, Wild Things, was a sell out. Tallulah is the daughter of the late Matthew McCord, a close cousin of James Fairfax. May 3, 5-7pm; May 4 and 5, 10am- 4pm. For further information contact Program Educator and Facilitator Penelope McManus at penelope.mc7@gmail.com. Also at Retford Park on May 11 and 12 (Mother's Day weekend), supporters and friends of the Southern Highlands Regional Gallery will host Made in Australia, an exhibition of artworks from their collection. Funds raised will contribute to the establishment of Southern Highlands Regional Gallery,

recently given the green light to be established in Retford Park's Old Dairy. Visitors will also have access to the gardens. Entry is free for National Trust members, otherwise fees apply.

Retford Park, 1325 Old South Road, Bowral; nationaltrust.org.au/places/retford-park

Sturt Gallery

Alumni 2, an exhibition of new work by selected graduates of the Sturt School for Wood 2005–2015, continues until April 7 and includes Mittagong designer and maker Ian Factor of Factor Design. It is followed by Punu – Living Wood, an exhibition featuring walka works and sculptures by artists from the Maruku Arts Centre at Uluru. Maruku is a craft co-operative representing about 900 artists, owned and operated by Aboriginal people from the Western and Central deserts of Australia. Walka is Pitjantjatjara for drawing, design or meaningful mark, and has come to describe small board paintings and works. Punu means wooden carving. April 14 to June 2. **Sturt Gallery, cnr Range Road and Waverley Parade, Mittagong; sturt.nsw.edu.au**

Southern Highlands Artisans Collective

Meanwhile, there's loads happening at SHAC, our newest gallery and artspace in Robertson, which recently became a not for profit organisation. New studio artists include weaver Penny Simons, visual artist Phoebe Middleton and painter Penny McManus, who will share a studio. Also new to the space is Yvette Tzallas, a visual artist and sister of architect Tina and photographer Gina and a former John Olson intern, as well as award winning sculptor and artist Bronwyn Berman. For info on painting and drawing classes, creative social nights and other goings on at Spud Lane Studios at the Back of SHAC, contact ric@spudlane.com.au or sign up to SHAC's newsletter. **The Old Potato Shed, 74-76 Hoddle Street, Robertson; theshac.com.au**



Annabelle Chauncy is the sort of person you would love your child to emulate. Founder of the School for Life which educates hundreds of children in Uganda, Annabelle was raised in Canyonleigh. She talks to ESH about hard work, the value of education and bringing purpose to your life.

You grew up in Canyonleigh? I had the most amazing childhood on a sheep and cattle farm with my mum, dad and two brothers. It was filled with outdoor adventures like building cubby houses in the trees, planting veggie gardens, riding my Shetland pony and motorbikes, and helping Dad with work in the sheep and cattle yards. **Do you still have family connections there?** Mum and Dad still live there and my brother and sister-in-law have a property in Sutton Forest. My grandma, who was a big influence, is in a nursing home in the Highlands. She contracted polio as a child and was told she would never walk again, ride horses or have children. She defied all the odds with her determination and resilience. She had two children, she rode horses and she walked. No one was going to get in her way! She also has a Medal of the Order of Australia for her service to people with disabilities. **Where did the desire to do something remarkable with your life come from?** I come from a family with strong values of respect, hard work, integrity, grit and positivity. I knew that nothing worth having comes easy and that you can't expect things to happen without hard work and determination. Mum has been my teacher throughout my life, starting at the tiny Sutton Forest Primary School. I then went to Frensham as a weekly boarder. Mum had a job at Gib Gate and Frensham while I was there. She's still there now. Frensham was absolutely instrumental in me setting up School for Life. Its motto is 'In Love Serve One Another'. **How did School for Life begin?** When I left Frensham I ended up studying Arts/Law but found it difficult to find purpose in my legal studies. I worked part time in a law firm and knew then I wasn't going

to be passionate about a career as a lawyer. So I signed up to a three month volunteer program teaching English to children in Kenya. It changed my life. I taught English (badly!) to children who spoke only Swahili, witnessed pure joy from children who have absolutely nothing, and saw the deep values of community and sharing from people who would literally give you the shirt off their back. **When did you think, 'I have to do something!'?** I was teaching English to children in a mud hut with a scratched out blackboard and no pens or pencils. The kids didn't have uniforms, books or desks. Many had walked up to 15 kilometres with no shoes on and an empty stomach to get there. But they did so with smiles on their faces and determination. They wanted to be educated. I knew in that moment that I could use my time, talent and networks to do something to help others. I realised my law degree was about something so much bigger. **What does School for Life look like today?** We currently have two primary schools and one high school in Uganda. We are educating 680 students and about to enrol another 320. We are also in the early stages of partnering with another amazing organisation operating in Uganda with the same model. Our schools are holistic community development models, and include provision for clean water, health care, vocational training and employment opportunities to lift entire communities out of poverty. I would love to see School for Life educating 10,000 kids across the developing world in at least 30 schools. **How do the schools help the communities?** We employ 78 full time staff: teachers, nurses, counsellors, cooks, cleaners, and maintenance, security and support staff, plus 50 extra part time staff when we are building. All of these staff are Ugandan, with as many from the local area as possible. We also provide scholarships to four

staff a year to go back to university for upskilling. **You have achieved many accolades for your work, including an Order of Australia.** The awards are beautiful acknowledgements of the hard work I put into School for Life, but for me it's about the children. I see tangible and real change with the dollars I raise. It is remarkable to see a child learn who otherwise may have been pregnant aged 13, or working on the family's subsistence farm. **How do you find work/life balance?** It can be a struggle, but I try to dedicate weekends to spending time with my partner, Marc, and my family and friends. Marc and I met when he volunteered to upskill our foreman on the construction site in Uganda. He believes in School for Life and the difference we are making, which makes it easy. **When you're home in the Highlands where do you always like to visit?** I'm partial to a delicious Gumnut Patisserie sausage roll or lemon citron cake. I love supporting locals. I am always excited when I see small businesses succeed due to hard work and determination. Highlands Merchant in Moss Vale is a personal fave. And Suzie Anderson Home. **How can we help support School for Life?** The best thing is to sponsor a child for \$42 a month. Our charity is so small that the money makes a remarkable difference in the life of the child and their family. We also have a Mount Kosciuszko climb on April 7 which is a great opportunity to get your family fit whilst fundraising, and our 10 Year Anniversary Gala will be held on May 4 at The Star in Sydney. **What is your message to Australian children?** You are one person but one person can make a difference. We all have the ability to create positive change. schoolforlife.org.au 📌

ESCAPE STOCKISTS

LOCAL HIGHLANDS ESCAPE STOCKISTS

General Store & Café Berrima, Berrima
Harpers Mansion, Berrima
Berida Hotel, Bowral
Cameron's Newsagency, Bowral
Dirty Jane's, Bowral
Gibraltar Hotel, Bowral
Harry's at Green Lane, Bowral
Janeks Café, Bowral
Milton Park, Bowral
NewsXpress Bowral, Bowral
Palate Pleasure, Bowral
The Press Shop, Bowral
Bundanoon Newsagency, Bundanoon
Exeter General Store, Exeter
Destination Southern Highlands,
Mittagong
NewsXpress Mittagong, Mittagong
Il Pranzo, Moss Vale
Moss Vale Newsagency, Moss Vale
Suzie Anderson Home, Moss Vale
Lucinda's Fine Food, Robertson
Red Cow Farm, Sutton Forest
Sturt Gallery, Mittagong
Southern Highland Wines, Sutton Forest
Wingello General Store, Wingello
Pete's Shed & Mrs, Bowral

OUT OF TOWN ESCAPE STOCKISTS NSW

Abbotsford Point News
Mackas Griffith News, Alexandria
Allambie Heights News
Annandale Village News
Booth Street Newsagency, Annandale
Mum N Dads Newsagency, Annandale
Atarmon Newsagency
Warehouse No 2, Artarmon
St Leonards Newsagency
Asquith Newsagency
Balgowlah Heights News
North Balgowlah News
Elliott Street News, Balmain
Hill Of Content Bookstore, Balmain
Worsley Newsagency, Banksmeadow
Batemans Bay, Batemans Bay
Beaconsfield Newsagency
Belrose Village News
Belrose Newsagency
Berowra News
Berry Newsagency, Berry
Birchgrove Newsagency
Nowra News, Bomaderry
Bondi Centre Newsagency, Bondi
Sixways Newsagency, Bondi Beach
Newsnew Newsagency, Bondi Junction
Eastgate Newsagency, Bondi Junction
Bondi Junction Newsagency
Botany Newsagency
Braidwood, Braidwood

Bronte Newsagency
Warringah Mall Newsagency, Brookvale
Buxton Newsagency
Camden Newsagency
Win Camden Newsagency, Camden
Cammeray Newsagency
Camperdown Newsagency
Castlecrag Newsagency
Chatswood S/Centre
Newspower Chatswood
Chase Nextra, Chatswood
Clovelly Local Newsagent
New Star Newsagency, Clovelly
Cobbitty General Store
Collaroy Beach Newsagency
Collaroy Plateau News
Coogee Village Newsagency
South Coogee News
NewsXpress Cooma, Cooma
Cremorne Newsagency
Davies Newsagency, Crookwell
Marketplace Newsagency, Crookwell
Crows Nest Newsagency
North Curl Curl News
Oxford Street Newsagency, Darlinghurst
Green Park Newsagency, Darlinghurst
Fire Station News Agency, Darlinghurst
Dee Why Newsagency
Double Bay Newsagency
Birkenhead Point Newsagency
Drummoyne Newsagency
Edgecliff Rail Bookstall
Eastpoint Newsagency, Edgecliff
Enmore Newsagency
Erskinvale News
Fairlight Newsagency
Wareemba Newsagency, Five Dock
Five Dock Newsagency
Forest Lodge Newsagency
Forestville Newsagency
Frenchs Forest Newsagency
Skyline Newsagency, Frenchs Forest
St Johns Newsagency, Glebe
Gleebooks, Glebe
Glebe Point Newsagency
Glebe Newsagency
East Gordon Newsagency
Gordon News
Newsxpress, Goulburn
First Inland City, Goulburn
Park Newsagency, Goulburn
Wollongong University, Gwynneville
Haberfield Newsagency
Harbord West Newsagency
Hornsby Mall Newsagency
Coronation St News, Hornsby
To's Newsagency, Hornsby
Jamberoo Newsagency
Jinabyne Newsxpress, Jindabyne
Kensington Central Newsagency
Kensington Pharmacy & N/A
Kiama Fair Newsagency
The Crewel Gobelin, Killara

Kings Cross Newsagency
Mowbray Road Newsagency, Lane Cove
Lane Cove Newsagency
Leichhardt Market Place
Lilyfield Newsagency
Lindfield Avenue News
Lindfield West Newsagency
Malabar Newsagency
Humphreys Newsagency, Manly
Newslink Manly Wharf
Maroubra Beach Newsagency
Maroubra Junction N/A
Pacific Square Newsagency, Maroubra
Marulan, Marulan
Eastlakes Newsagency, Mascot
Cleary Mascot News, Mascot
Supanews Central Station, Mascot
Whsmith Mascot
Kelly & Vans, Matraville
Michlago General Store, Michlago
Mosman Newsagency
Spit Junction Newsagency
Mount Colah Newsagency
Narraweena News
Wycombe Road Newsagency, Neutral Bay
Neutral Bay Newsagency
King Street Newsagency, Newtown
Nguyen Newsagency, Newtown
Better Read, Newtown
Ben Buckler Newsagency, North Bondi
North Sydney Newsagency
Northbridge Newsagents
Sturgiss Newsagency, Nowra
Paddington Newsagency
Eastgardens Newsagency
Lee & Jack, Pagewood
Petersham Newsagency
Picton Newsagency
Potts Point Bookshop
Pymble Newsagency
West Pymble Newsagency
QBE Papershop, Queanbeyan
Killara News Distributors
Central Pyrmont Newsagent
Randwick Village News
Frenchmans Rd Newsagency, Randwick
Randwick Plaza News
Randwick Newsagency
The Spot Newsagency, Randwick
South Sydney Newsagency, Redfern
Mai Phi Newsagency, Redfern
Surry Hills Mall News, Redfern
Rose Bay Newsagency
Rose Bay North News
Rosebery Mall Newsagency
Rosebery North Newsagency
Roseville News
Rozelle Newsagency
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St Ives Village News
St Ives News
St Peters Railway Station
Stanmore Newsagency

Surry Hills Newsagency
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Devonshire Newsagency, Surry Hills
World Square Newsagency, Sydney
Kent City News, Sydney
Jia Kiosk, Sydney
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Emporium Pty Ltd, Sydney
Townhall Sq Newsagency, Sydney
Macquarie Street News, Sydney
Sydney Newsagent, Sydney
Queen Victoria Newsagency, Sydney
Hickey St Newsagency, Sydney
Terrey Hills Newsagency
The Oaks Newsagency
Turramurra Newsagency
North Turramurra News
Ulladulla Lotteries, Ulladulla
Daily Planet Newsagency, Ultimo
Vaucluse Newsagency
Wahroonga East Newsagency
Wahroonga Village News
Waitara Newsagency
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Iga Waverton
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Wh Smith Aust Pty Ltd, Woolloomooloo
Yass, Yass

ACT

Newsxpress Belconnen
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Convention Centre News
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Oh what a feeling!

[D2] Recommended driveaway price (RDP) shown is applicable for Private customers, Bronze, and Silver Fleet customers, and primary producers, only at participating NSW & ACT dealers. Offer available on new January 2018 to December 2018 built models purchased between 01/02/2019 and 28/02/2019 unless extended. RDP includes 12 months registration, 12 months compulsory third party insurance (CTP), a maximum dealer delivery charge and stamp duty. Metallic/Premium paint at additional cost. Leather accented pack (GXL) at additional cost. Toyota reserves the right to amend the offer and terms at any stage. [D3] Recommended driveaway price (RDP) shown is applicable for Private customers, Bronze, and Silver Fleet customers, and primary producers, only at participating dealers. Offer available on new September 2018 to December 2018 built models purchased between 01/02/2019 and 28/02/2019 unless extended. RDP includes 12 months registration, 12 months compulsory third party insurance (CTP), a maximum dealer delivery charge, stamp duty and metallic/premium paint. Toyota reserves the right to amend the offer and terms at any stage. [D4] Recommended driveaway price (RDP) shown is applicable for Private customers, Bronze, and Silver Fleet customers, and primary producers, only at participating dealers. Offer available on new January 2018 to December 2018 built models purchased between 01/02/2019 and 28/02/2019 unless extended. RDP includes 12 months registration, 12 months compulsory third party insurance (CTP), a maximum dealer delivery charge, stamp duty and metallic/premium paint. Toyota reserves the right to amend the offer and terms at any stage. [V] Recommended driveaway price (RDP) shown is applicable for Private customers, Bronze, and Silver Fleet customers, and primary producers, only at participating dealers. Offer available on new June 2018 to December 2018 built models purchased between 01/02/2019 and 28/02/2019 unless extended. RDP includes free automatic transmission, 12 months registration, 12 months compulsory third party insurance (CTP), a maximum dealer delivery charge and stamp duty. Metallic/Premium paint at additional cost. Toyota reserves the right to amend the offer and terms at any stage. [R] Terms and conditions apply. Roadside assist expires 3 years from the vehicle delivery date. Valid on all new 2018 build Yaris & C-HR models purchased between 01/12/2018 and 28/02/2019. Offer available to Private customers, Bronze and Silver Fleet customers only. Toyota Finance reserves the right to change, extend or withdraw the offer at any time. Toyota Roadside Assist is administered by Toyota Finance, a division of Toyota Finance Australia Limited ABN 48 002 435 181, AFSL and Australian Credit Licence 392536.

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KEEPING THEM BUSY

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LET'S GET PHYSICAL

It's not bribery, exactly, but a happy compromise with an irresistible reward: 'Let's go for a long walk first then get some ice cream, if you behave...' Choose one of the fabulous family bushwalks on page 68 thanks to the Southern Highlands Bushwalkers, then when the kids have walked the hard yards, head to the Old Cheese Factory at Robertson for the best selection of homemade on site ice cream and gelato in the Highlands. If you're more over the Berrima side, visit The Little Hand Stirred Jam Shop for great ice cream flavour choices for the kids, and a rum and raisin or salted caramel for the supervising adults. Or if in Moss Vale, Bernie's Diner does the best ice-cream sundaes by none.



MEND & MAKE BETTER

If you haven't heard, local Hans Radowitz is a bit of a star. He is the Wingecarribee Shire Council's Australia Day 2019 Citizen of the Year, because over the past 10 years Hans and his team have collected and repaired more than 2700 bicycles for Bikes 4 Life, a national charity that distributes bikes to African school children and health care workers for transportation. Working out of the fabulous Moss Vale Resource Recovery Centre with a small team of volunteers, Hans has also sent wheelchairs and walkers to Africa. And now he is running a school holiday bike repair workshop for our keen kid cyclists on April 17. Details are still to be confirmed but all children will need to bring is their own helmet if they arrive with their own bike. For more information contact Libby Guest, Waste Education Officer at Wingecarribee Shire Council. Ride on Hans! **Contact Elizabeth.Guest@wsc.nsw.gov.au for details**



GNOCCHI GNOCCHI, WHO'S THERE?

Get the kids interested in cooking the easy and effective way: by a professional chef in someone else's kitchen! The most excellent Moonacres Farm is running its first kids cooking workshop in the Easter school holidays aimed at kids aged from 7 to 15. They will harvest their own organic spuds from the earth at Moonacres Farm and learn to make gnocchi by hand. Then they will lunch on their own freshly made gnocchi with handmade organic passata, drinks included. **April 14, 10am-1pm, Moonacres Farm, Fitzroy Falls, \$70pp. moonacres.com.au**

THOROUGHLY OUTDOORSY

Sign up your 7 to 14 year old girls and boys for a school holiday camp at the Santa Sabina College Tallong campus. The outdoor education and retreat centre holds this three day camp regularly and includes activities such as self defence, mountain bike riding, archery, flying fox, and arts and crafts. Situated in beautiful bushland, the package includes two nights' accommodation plus all meals and equipment, with bus travel available to and from Sydney and day only stays also available. **April 15-17, \$320 per child. ssc.nsw.edu.au/tallong**

GYMKHANA FOR ALL

Got a horse mad kid in your house? Oxley College's annual Equestrian Day is on again this year on April 9 at Bong Bong Racecourse. Events include dressage, show jumping, show horse and sporting. Open to all school age riders K-12. Contact **kim.mcnaught@oxley.nsw.edu.au** Sarah Spence at Equestrian Connection is holding a gymkhana at her Moss Vale property for beginners, intermediate and experienced riders and horses, and adults wanting to get back in the saddle after some time. The day will start with hacking classes, and there are horses and ponies available for non equine owning families. **April 14, \$40pp if you BYO horse; horses are available to ride for \$60 per day. For more details contact Sarah on 0437 718 583 or through Facebook @equestrianconnectionau**

KOALA KAPERS

It has only recently become apparent the Highlands is home to a healthy koala population of approximately 3000 thanks to research undertaken by Wingecarribee Shire Council, Sydney University and Conservation Volunteers Australia. And as seeing a koala living in the wild is sure to excite your kids, you'll love a new initiative being launched in April. Koalarama is designed to encourage the community to celebrate, look after and nurture these precious natives. Join the experts at Bowral Koalarama to look at local koala habitat maps, listen to an expert talk on the ecology and behaviour of koalas, hear stories of local resident koalas and learn how private landholders can contribute to koala conservation. Then, weather permitting, take your kids on a one hour spotlight search for koalas at Mansfield Reserve in East Bowral. **April 16 from 6pm, venue tbc. For information, check the Southern Highlands Koala Conservation Project Facebook page @SouthernHighlandsKoalas**

HIGHLANDS ESSENTIALS

A QUICK LIST OF USEFUL CONTACTS IN THE HIGHLANDS

EMERGENCY:

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 4869 7899

(stations only open Saturday 8am-4.30pm)

Southern Highlands Police Centre, newly opened Hume Police District area control. Elizabeth Street, Moss Vale 4862 7899 Open 24 Hours.

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

Highlands Personal Transport. Call And Book 0408 211 267

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 Centre, Elizabeth St, Moss Vale 4868 0888

Resource Recovery Centre Open 7.30am – 4.30pm

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

Wingecarribee Animal Shelter Berrima Road, Moss Vale 4868 1520

WIRES 13000 94737





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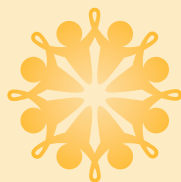
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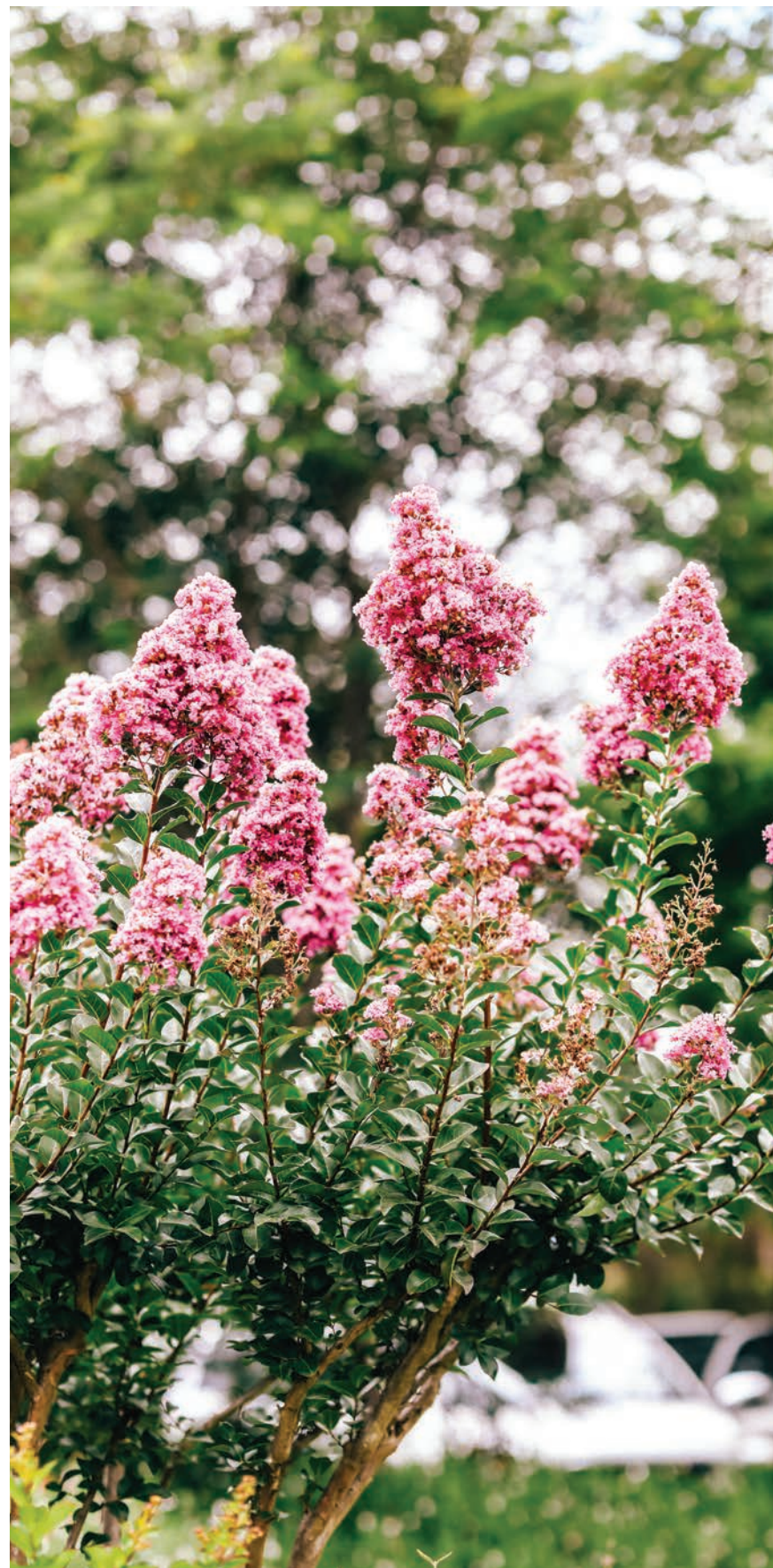


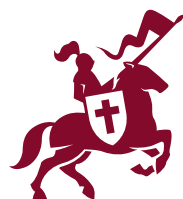
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Chevalier College

enrolments@chevalier.nsw.edu.au | chevalier.nsw.edu.au | (02) 4861 0524





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For further information contact the Enrolments Office by email: **enrol_tudor@kings.edu.au** or Phone: **02 4868 0008**.



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IN MY BACKYARD

Vigneron Mark Bourne is owner and founder of Cuttaway Hill Wines and, until recently, president of Southern Highlands Food and Wine Association. Now keeping busy with the NSW Wine Industry Association and the National Wine and Grape Industry Centre at Charles Sturt University, Mark talks to ESH about bugs, the local industry and jobs still to do.

‘My wife Debra and I moved to the Highlands in 1996. We moved from Walgett in northern NSW where Debra was a teacher and I taught at TAFE helping kids who weren’t suited to school to find a job. Debra’s family had a property, Giruvian Park on Old South Road in Mittagong, and we started planting eight acres of chardonnay, cabernet and semillon blanc.

I had always been interested in horticulture, and I’d worked as a tree surgeon for a bit. We arrived before the boom in cool climate viticulture, and were only about the fourth vineyard here. There was only Joadja, Ealing Forest, Howards Lane and us. Our two daughters, who are now aged 22 and 20, both grew up on the vineyard. It was a big life change.

I suppose we were ahead of the curve before the boom in the wine industry in Australia. The industry really took off from the late 1990s to the early 2000s when the big planting boom took place in Australia. It was basically driven by tax offset incentives, and there was a program to plant so many plants in Australia within 20 years. I think they reached the figure in eight years.

When we started there was no cohesion between wine growers here, so in 1998 we formed the Southern Highlands Vignerons Association. That meant we could start planning with a shared vision, but first we had two big jobs to get done. The first was to get the Southern Highlands recognised as a wine region, because no one knew there were even grapes growing here.

In actual fact, there are historic records of vines being first grown out near Mandemar on the site of what was to become Tertini, and Joadja Vineyards celebrates its 32nd birthday this year. So we had our region defined as a high altitude cool climate region. That is basically 500 metres and above in the Wingecarribee Shire, and today our region is recognised around the world.

The second big job was to get the region declared as a phylloxera free region. Phylloxerae are nasty little aphid pests that are devastating vineyards around the world. It’s endemic and it’s very expensive because you can’t take grapes out of a phylloxera affected area, or take machinery out. You are basically under quarantine. So it’s a huge restriction on trade.



Once we had the region defined, we were no longer part of the Sydney/Camden region and tested everything here three years in a row. We were the first wine region in Australia to go from phylloxera declared to phylloxera free, and that still holds. So they were two significant and important jobs we ticked off early in the wine industry around here.

There are 18 cellar doors in the Southern Highlands open every weekend. There are still a few vineyards who don't have cellar doors but the region remains boutique sized and family owned.

People often get confused about the difference between a vineyard and a winery. A vineyard is where the grapes are grown and a winery is where production or sales take place. Local wineries are Southern Highlands Wines, Joadja Estate, Ealing Forest, Centennial, Tertini and Artemis.

Here at Cuttaway Hill we have 15 acres under cultivation and we generally grow pinot noir, semillon blanc, chardonnay, pinot gris, cabernet and merlot. The grape production is one facet of the vineyard, but there's much more involved of course. It's the site, the grapes, the climate and the soils that determine the quality of the grapes and the wine, and there's a huge difference in local wines, from grapes grown at the top of the hill to grapes grown at the bottom, and so on. It's a combination of how you manage the vines, as well as the soil and climate, so each label

has its own microclimate. The French call it 'terroir'.

I've heard talk over the years that winemakers in the region don't really get on but that's never been the case. It's Southern Highlands gossip. We are not in competition but rather in the same boat and we work together well to attract more visitors and wine drinkers to our region. I think it's safe to say we share that common goal, and we've still got work to do.

Last year, for the first time, the Southern Highlands hosted the NSW Wine Awards. It was an important step for us and has helped bring credibility and focus to our region. For the awards, 16 judges tasted 900 wines from all over NSW. It's the most subjective system you can get because it's totally blind. The judges sit there with a blank glass in front of them with a number on it. It's quite a humbling thing to get your wine judged in the show system, objectively in a line up with all the same style wines. It's a great leveller.

Cuttaway Hill was the first vineyard to plant pinot noir here and we were the first people to make sparkling wine here with traditional methods (the bottle you buy it in is the bottle it's made) in 17 years ago. Centennial, Artemis, Cherry Tree and Tertini are all making some great sparklings here too now, so it's got a very strong future around here. It's a premium product that suits a premium region like ours. ■

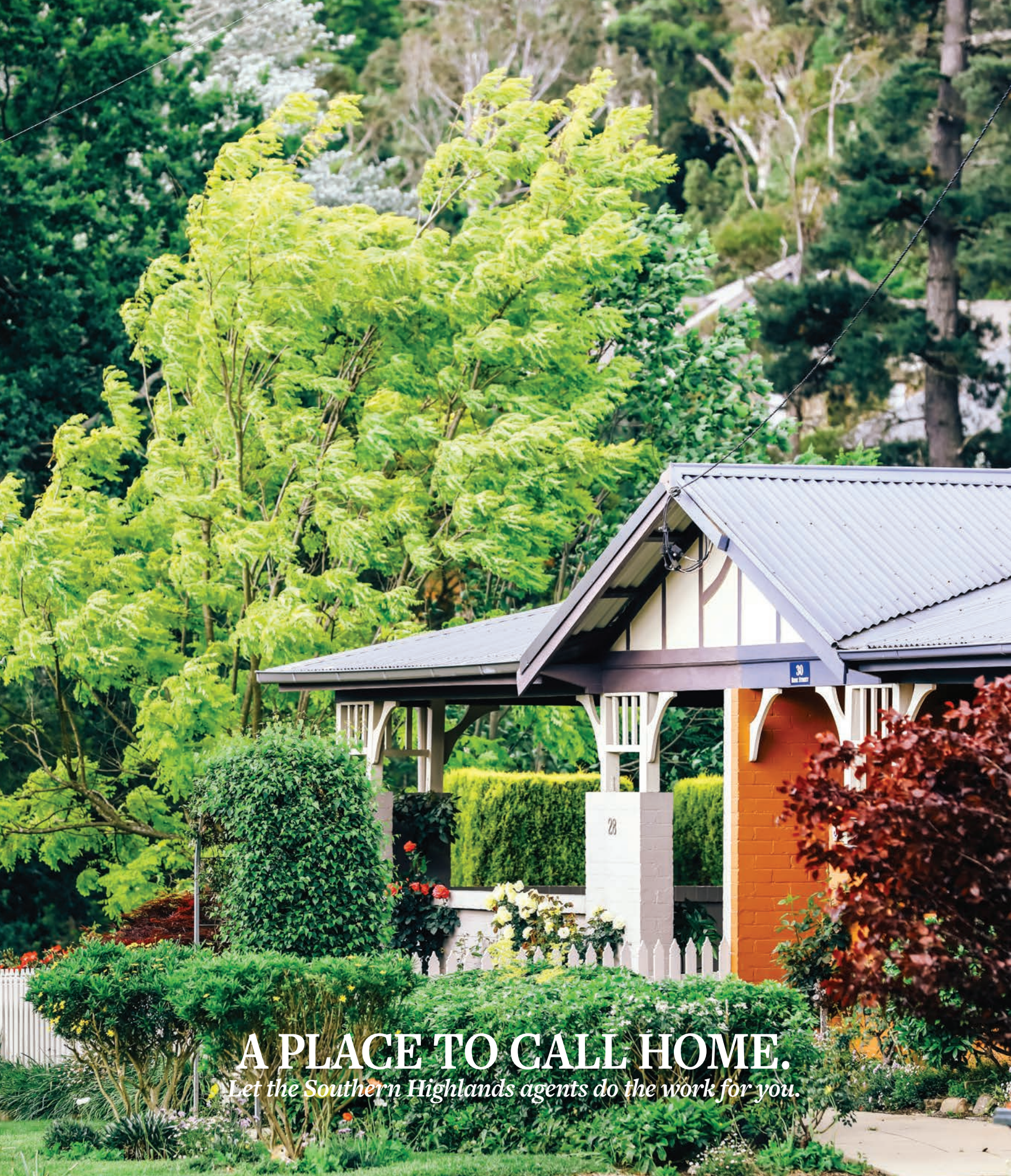


DETAILS

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Letty



LETTY is a one year old female Cattle Dog cross, who arrived at the shelter with her 4 siblings when she was 14 weeks old. Letty has now been in our care for almost 9 months.

Letty is very intelligent, and easy to train. She loves playing fetch and having cuddles with her favourite people.



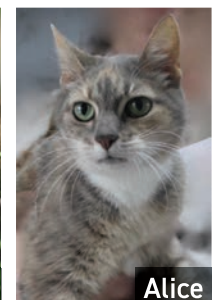
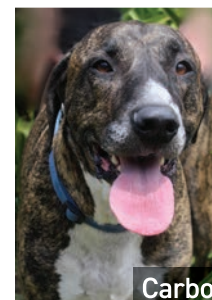
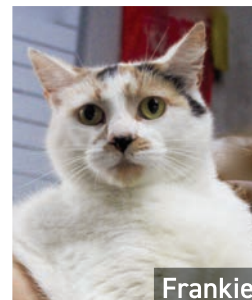
Letty is looking for an understanding home, as she can be a little cautious around new people at first, but after a few games of fetch, she will be your best friend for life.

Letty is used to being on her own and is very good at keeping herself entertained. She will play with her favourite toys all day, so she would be perfect for someone who works during the day.

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Like many original weatherboards in the Highlands, the original schoolhouse for the area has been extended and meticulously renovated. However, its historical footprint is still obvious, mainly in the long living room with vaulted ceilings and original slow combustion fire and mezzanine level loft library, presumably once full of school desks and students. It has a country kitchen but comes with all the mod cons demanded by the stylish high end cook. Timber benchtops, butler's sink, double ovens, Miele dishwasher and, our favourite by far, French doors to the herb garden with growing plants to pick and add.

An elegant Highlands dame, this dream property also comes with four bedrooms, all with views over the garden through plantation shutters, and sits in an elegant established garden with level lawn, beautiful trees and hedging, and a watering system. There's even a double garage to park the his and hers Audis. Plus, its north facing.

Dream treechange home in one fell swoop? Tick. **12**



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