

# Sydney Observer

JUNE 2015 - FREE

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UNDERSTANDING  
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**WOMEN'S  
SUPER**  
THE RETIREMENT  
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**MEN'S  
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WEEK**

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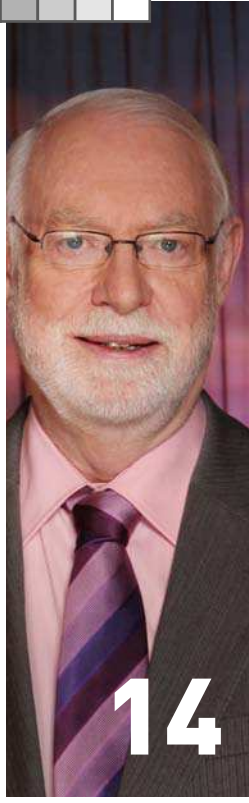
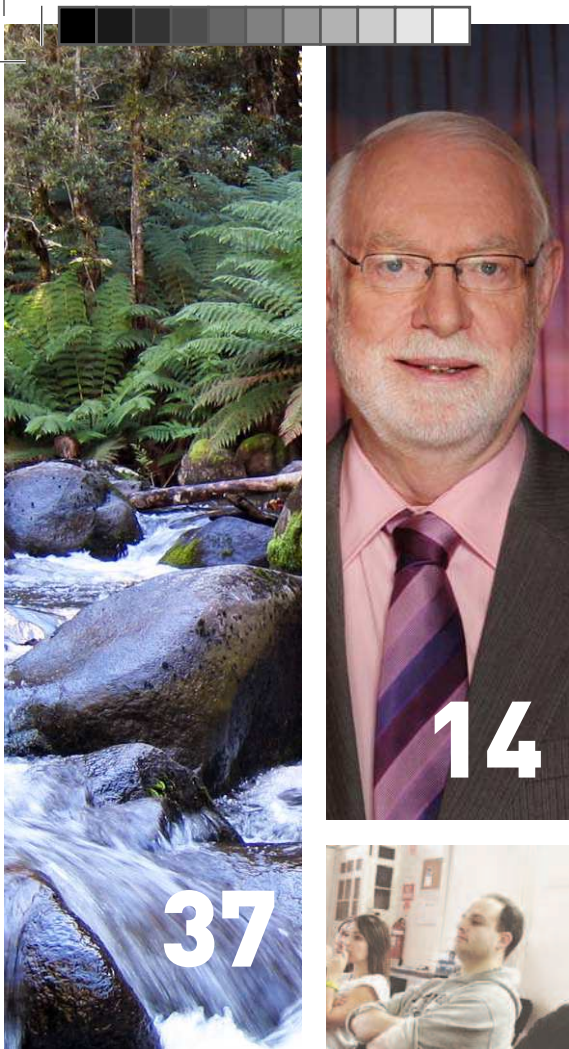
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## From the team

Well, winter has officially hit. Days are getting colder, nights are getting longer and it's becoming a little more challenging to get up and go in the morning. There are so many ways to enjoy this time of year – sometimes it just takes a bit of planning!

There's plenty to love about this great city of ours. June brings us one of Sydney's favourite events: the Sydney Film Festival. To celebrate this exciting time of year when the best of Australian and international film comes to Sydney, we spoke to the brilliant David Stratton (Profile, pages 14-15). David shared some of his memories of directing the Festival during the 70's and 80's. He also told us about his lifelong love of Ingmar Bergmann's films, which will be screened in a special exhibit during the Film Festival. You can find Sydney Film Festival dates in What's On (page 48).

In other news, the latest federal budget was released recently and that's put finances on everyone's mind. We look at what the budget means for small business owners and for women (On the Agenda, pages 18-20). As always you'll find the latest tips for fashion, gardening and health. All of us at the Sydney Observer hope you enjoy this time of year and make the most of the unique opportunities winter brings.



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FROM THE READERS

# Letters



## A true dilemma

I felt so saddened when I read the article written by Kieran Gair in your May edition, 2015 (Zoe's Law: Unborn children and women's rights, p18-19). What a true dilemma we face when our unborn children are not really quite yet humans; disposable in fact.

A threat to the mother's life or health, or pregnancy resulting from rape or incest are times when compassionate options to terminate should of course be available.

But to make a statement that recognition of an "unborn child" could make us complicit in "watering down of women's reproductive rights" made me feel ashamed as an Australian that the cries of the unborn have been silenced for so long and dismissed as less than human.

*Robbie Regan*

# Giveaways

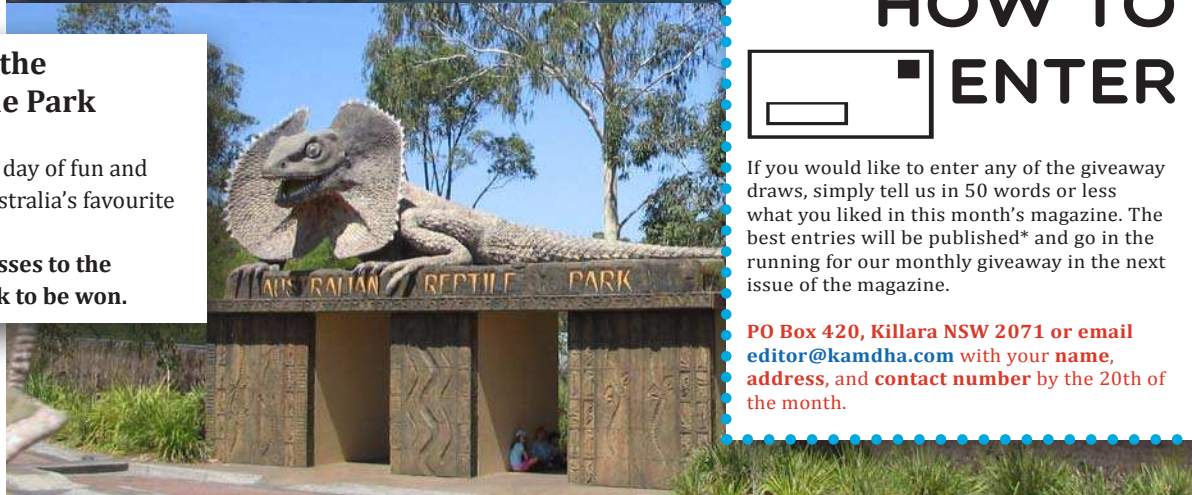
## Family passes to the Australian Maritime Museum

Journey back in time and follow in the footsteps of Antarctic explorers at the Australian Maritime Museum. **We have five family passes to be won.**



## Family passes to the Australian Reptile Park

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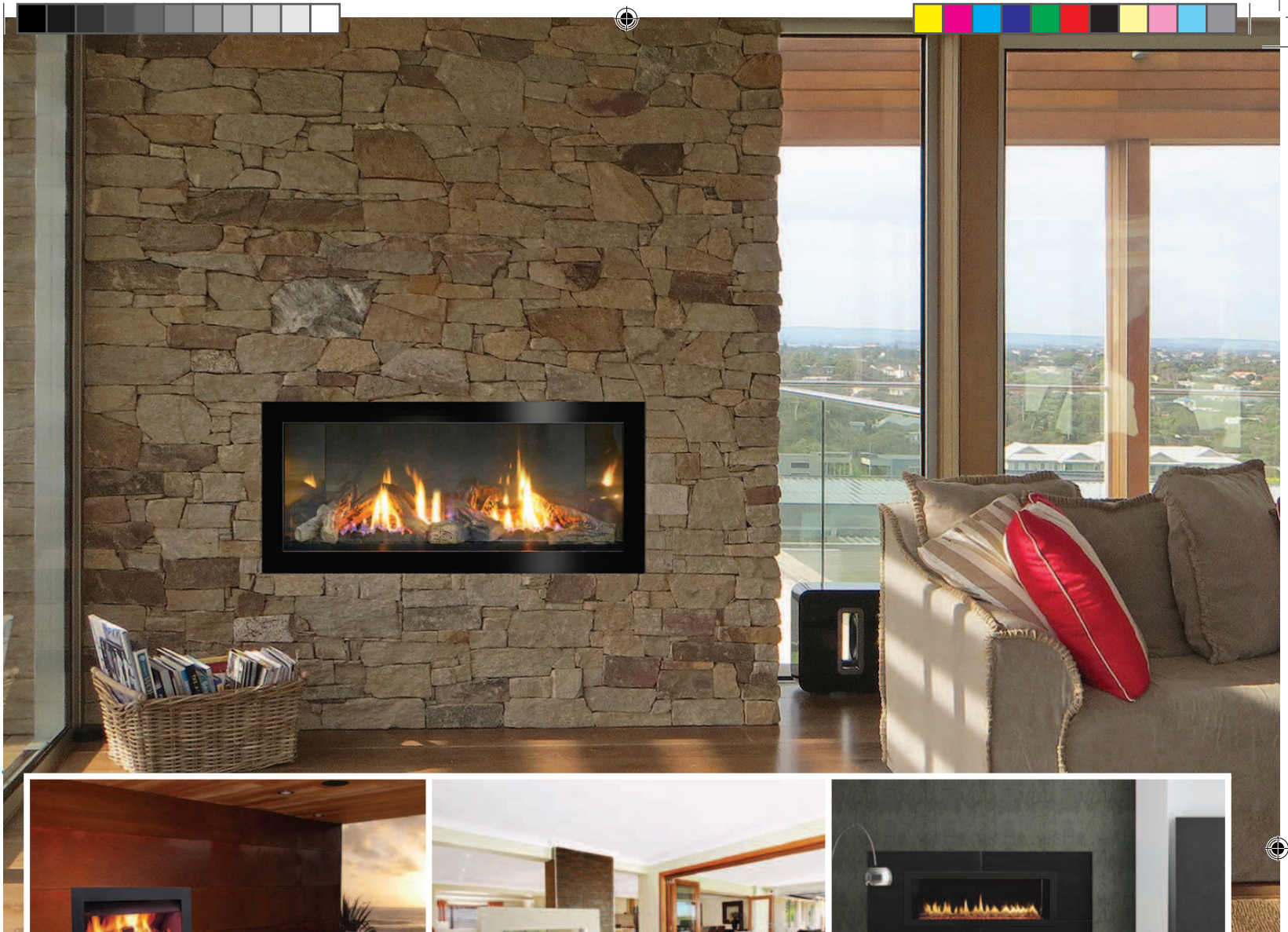
## HOW TO ENTER



If you would like to enter any of the giveaway draws, simply tell us in 50 words or less what you liked in this month's magazine. The best entries will be published\* and go in the running for our monthly giveaway in the next issue of the magazine.

**PO Box 420, Killara NSW 2071 or email [editor@kamdha.com](mailto:editor@kamdha.com) with your name, address, and contact number by the 20th of the month.**





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## Nannas knit for Nepal

**LOCAL KNITTING GROUPS** have volunteered a great deal of their time to knitting wraps in aid of victims of the recent Nepal earthquake. The disaster took the lives of over 8000 people and left many others without basic provisions including food, medical supplies and shelter.

Hornsby Library and Epping Library knitting groups hand knitted eighty wraps and sent them to Wrap with Love, a not-for-profit organisation that helps the millions of people around the world suffering from the cold. The wraps will be distributed to areas in desperate need of help.

In the past 20 years the organisation

has sent out 323 000 wraps to over 75 countries., helping many people in need.

“Hornsby Shire is filled with compassionate people, and it’s good to see that residents were able to support the Nepalese people in their time of need,” Hornsby Shire Mayor Steve Russell said.

The knitting groups meet each week at the Hornsby, Pennant Hills, Berowra and Epping branches. Any interested members of the community are encouraged to join the knitting groups. For those who want to help in other ways, donations of eight ply wool, squares and completed wraps are also welcome.



## More markets for Ku-ring-gai

**THE OLD ST IVES** school car park has been chosen as the preferred site for a casual weekend market, a report to Ku-ring-gai Council has shown. The report came after the successful launch of a monthly Sunday market at the East Lindfield Community Hall.

The plan was established to stimulate economic growth in the Ku-ring-gai area. Ku-ring-gai Council has approved the changes to the management plan for the site meaning that markets can now commence. The car park is behind Mona Vale Road with entrances from Rosedale Road and Stanley Lane. It also contains

several Council-owned buildings leased to community organisations and small business owners.

A survey conducted last year showed 366 responses in support of a market at the old school site. Mayor Jennifer Anderson said submissions had been received from 12 residents concerned about the impact of a market on local parking but she said the Council was confident these would be addressed in a traffic management plan.

“We expect that a market could begin trading later this year once approval has been obtained,” Mayor Anderson said.



## ‘Missing link’ plans

**CONSTRUCTION OF A** Western Sydney Light Rail Network between the CBDs of Macquarie Park and Parramatta via Carlingford and Epping was recently discussed by federal, state and local members of Parliament.

The consensus was reached that a plan of action must be established to address this ‘missing link’. At a symposium held at Macquarie University, members agreed this was the preferred link for stage one of the Western Sydney Light Rail Network.

City of Ryde Mayor Bill Pickering said, “Today, we demonstrated how servicing this Global Economic

Corridor with adequate and connected transport infrastructure will ensure its continued significant contribution to the State’s economy and reputation as an international city and benefit the wider Sydney region.”

It is hoped the light rail network will transport 10 000 passengers per hour, while also reducing the number of single-driver car trips. The mayors of Ryde and Parramatta will take their proposal for a Parramatta to Macquarie Park Stage One link to the NSW Government soon and further updates and information will be made available to the public.





# New plans for Ku-ring-gai waste

Alex Dalland

**KU-RING-GAI COUNCIL HOPES** to make waste collection more sustainable and tackle challenges such as e-waste with the help of a new survey giving local residents the opportunity to share their thoughts on waste management.

Possible changes listed in the survey include excluding mattresses from council clean-ups, picking up waste more frequently and active communication strategies with local residents. The Council will also look into excluding e-waste such as televisions and computers from clean-ups in favour of more sustainable recycling schemes.

"We are running the survey to gauge residents' current satisfaction with services, and to make changes for the

future," says Sally Williams from Ku-ring-gai Council.

"It's the start of a process which may result in changes to how waste collection is managed."

E-waste is a particular challenge for the Council, with computers, televisions and laptops being some of the fastest growing types of waste. Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicates that 75% of the 3 million computers bought in 2009 ended up in landfill.

"E-Waste is something all councils are grappling with," Ms Williams says.

"Nowadays there is a much reduced longevity of technology. People tend to hoard their e-waste and don't quite know what to do with it and how to dispose of

it," she says.

Ku-ring-gai Council organised a free e-waste collection weekend last October to recycle items like computers, televisions, DVD players and laptops. Ms Williams says this could be one solution to the e-waste problem.

"Our e-waste collection was very successful and one strategy might be to make a regular e-waste collection," Ms Williams says.

Currently e-waste is accepted as part of household waste in council clean-up but is then sent straight to landfill and not recycled. The nearest drop-off site for Ku-ring-gai residents wanting to recycle e-waste is the Kimbriki Resource Recovery Centre in Terrey Hills.

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# A life-changing donation

Christian Berechree

**AN EPPING MAN** has proved that hard work and generosity pay off by securing a \$20 000 grant for Autism Spectrum Australia. Loch Wijesinghe, restaurant performance manager for KFC Australia, received the grant through KFC's Volunteer for Hope Program. He chose to donate the entire amount to Autism Spectrum Australia's Adult Social Group, an organisation he has been involved with for several months.

Mr Wijesinghe, along with his colleague David, used his business management skills to run employment workshops and training for members of the group. Through a series of weekend programs, members of the group developed valuable skills in resume writing, interviewing and negotiation.

Mr Wijesinghe says while he is

grateful for the financial support, it was never his motivation.

"We never did it for the grant. We did it to make a difference. This is the icing on the cake," Mr Wijesinghe said.

Mr Wijesinghe gave up many hours of his own weekend time to run the workshops. It was his first experience working with adults with autism and he found it a rewarding one.

"I haven't dealt with autistic adults before. I spent a lot of time building a rapport with them," Mr Wijesinghe said. "Autism is something that is not very well known in Australia. We felt that we could make a real difference."

Mr Wijesinghe's involvement with the Adult Social Group has seen group members develop their skills and secure work experience. He hopes to get more

of his colleagues from KFC involved in his volunteering efforts.

Mr Wijesinghe's dedication to making a difference ultimately led to him receiving the Volunteer for Hope grant, which recognises outstanding contributions made to charity partners. The Adult Social Group relies entirely on community fundraising. According to Autism Australia's National President, John Kelly, the donation will make a significant difference.

"The \$20 000 grant will assist us to offer more workshops and more training," Mr Kelly said. He said Mr Wijesinghe's support goes beyond the donation.

"David and Loch have provided about 180 hours of their time. We recognise the skills they've brought and the benefits," Mr Kelly said. "Having a long term



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relationship and partnership is more valuable than a donation.”

Mr Kelly said he wants to thank Yum! Brands, the corporate body behind KFC and other food brands, for their generosity and social responsibility. Keeping with the theme of food, he said the grant will go towards running cooking

skills workshops with professional nutritionists, dieticians and chefs. He also hopes to create a food and recipe book for the Adult Social Group.

“Some members have particular food preferences which isn’t always great for health,” Mr Kelly said. “They have quite narrow food choices which we’re trying

to broaden,” he said.

Mr Kelly said Loch and David’s ongoing involvement and support of the organisation will be invaluable.

“They are really engaged with the organisation as a whole. They’ve gotten to know us well,” Mr Kelly said. “It’s a pleasure to have them on board.”

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# Stalker to New Yorker

Christian Berechree



**WITH A NAME** like *Stalker: The Musical*, Alex Giles knew his show was always going to put some people on edge. He hopes it will still find plenty of fans, though, as it heads to the home of theatre as the only Australian act selected for the 2015 New York Fringe Festival.

"There were some people in our workshop in January who were offended," Alex, 28 said. "The people who were offended in that workshop may have not been the sort of people who would actually buy tickets and come to see *Stalker*."

The show, written by Alex and his writing partner David Russell, with music composed by Andy Peterson is set in a fictional town where love is banned and relationships don't exist. Instead of forming bonds and emotional connections, residents of the town engage in neighbourhood voyeurism, peeping through each other's windows and watching each other unawares. It's a situation everyone in the town accepts and even encourages. Alex describes the show as a black comedy with an edge and generous helpings of crude humour.

"It's not written offensively. It's written in a story world where this is the norm. So the characters themselves aren't offended," he said.

*Stalker* is the product of more than two years of hard work by Alex and the production team. It has been developed with members of the Sydney musical theatre industry and it has already gone through several workshops and incarnations. Now the show is about to reach new heights, as the only Australian production accepted into the 2015 New York Fringe Festival.

*Stalker* is the first musical Alex has been involved in writing, having trained and worked in film writing and production for several years. His short films have been screened around the world and he's excited to see his new project heading to the home of theatre.

"It's overwhelming," Alex said. "There's a lot to organise, and because we're still working very hard to make the script the best it can be there's a lot of writing to do. Everyone that's involved is working very hard to try and put on a great show."

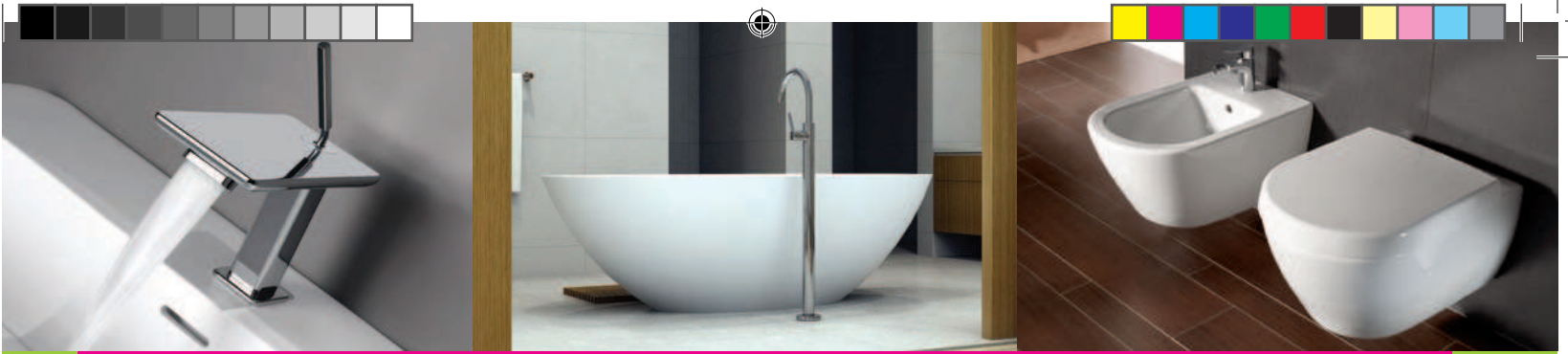
Alex and the team will put on *Stalker* alongside 150 acts at the Fringe Festival in August this year. They will be given a small performance space with basic sound and lighting. They're hoping the five performances at Fringe will lead to bigger and better opportunities.

"The end goal would be the New York Musical Theatre Festival. That'd be the dream, to get into that," Alex said. "That's kind of where we'd really get a chance to get it seen by some big producers who might consider putting it on Off Broadway."

Alex said his first foray into musical theatre writing has made him eager for more and he is already working on a number of other projects. He is grateful for all the support *Stalker* has received.

"We have had so much support from friends and family and performers and venues. People want it to be good. People always want to know about it and want to help in whatever way they can." ○

To find out more about *Stalker: The Musical*, visit [stalkerthemusical.com](http://stalkerthemusical.com).



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# David Stratton

## An enduring love of film

Christian Berechree

**M**ANY PEOPLE HAVE a love affair with films. They like to see them, discuss them and rave about them to their friends. For iconic film critic David Stratton, it's more like a lifelong marriage.

"From a very young age I was very excited about film," David says. "By the time I was 19 I'd started a film society in my home town, a small town. By the time I was 25, 26 I was directing the Sydney Film Festival."

As one half of the iconic *At the Movies* team, David was one of the voices of film criticism in Australia. After hosting the show for ten years on the ABC, and for 18 years before that on SBS when it was *The Movie Show*, the pair were considered the final word on film in Australia.

David's most famous role as a television presenter and film critic may have come to an end in 2014, but his involvement in film in Australia is far from over. He continues to write a column for *The Australian* every week and lectures in film history at the Sydney University Centre for Continuing Education. Most recently, he has returned to one of his great loves, the Sydney Film Festival. This year he is curating an exhibit of legendary Swedish director Ingmar Bergman's films.

"Bergman was one of a handful of film makers who emerged in the 1950s who to me as a young film buff, a teenager at that time, just blew me away," David says.

"I saw his film *Smiles of a Summer Night*. It was the first time I'd seen a



Swedish film and the first time I'd seen a serious foreign language film. It was so refreshingly different and so meaningful that it really changed the way I looked at film."

David hopes a new generation of film goers will experience the same awe and excitement about Bergman's films that he did as a young man. As he points out, the exhibit will show the films as they were meant to be seen: on a big screen projected from 35mm film.

Bergman has been described as one of the great film auteurs; a director whose personal creative vision is played out in their films, as if they were the primary author. David has always been struck by the director's exploration of deeply personal concerns, such as his constant questioning about the existence of God.

"Those questions are as relevant today as they were when the films were first made. I'm sure new generations of film goers, if they're not familiar with Bergman's work will be just as thrilled as I was," David says.

As director of the Sydney Film Festival from 1966 to 1983, David saw Australian film through a golden age. He describes the 1970s as a revival for Australian film, and he wrote a book on the subject, *The Last New Wave*. He remembers fondly when the Festival was moved from in and around Sydney University to the State Theatre in 1974, cementing it as a citywide event.

"We finally managed to move into the State Theatre, and that was a great night. I'll never forget the Prime Minister

at the time, Gough Whitlam opened the festival that year. It was a really dazzling event. So, that was certainly one of the great memories. The following year, 1975, we did the first big retrospective of Australian films that had really been done in Australia," David says. "That was something I'm very proud of."

Since a young age, David has never stopped loving, consuming, discussing and promoting film. He's best known for his insightful and highly influential film reviews, and his name is synonymous

## "I didn't really set out to have a career in film at all."

in Australia with the term "film critic". However, it was never something he planned to do. Rather, as he says, it's something he sort of fell into.

"I didn't really set out to have a career in film at all. In my mid teens I discovered international films and went on from there," David says. He saw his burgeoning career with the Sydney Film Festival and later in film criticism as a way to do what he had always done: tell people about the films he loved.

"That was what I was doing - I was kind of, if you like, trying to get across to a wide audience the films that I'd seen that I had liked or loved or admired," David says.

Now in his 70s, David still finds

ways to share the love of cinema with as many people as possible. One way he does this is through his work at Sydney University's Centre for Continuing Education, where he has been lecturing in film history for more than 20 years.

"I love it," he says. "That comes down to what I was saying before about my first obsession. Back to when I was a small child I'd go and see a film and tell my friends all about it and encourage them to see it. I was doing that when I was about seven years old and really it's the same now. I try to convey to people and tell them 'this is what film is all about'. I really enjoy it."

Since *At The Movies* aired for the last time in 2014, no one has quite picked up the mantle of top film critic held by David and Margaret for so long. No doubt this is as much due to their longevity as their impeccable pedigrees, but David is confident about the future of film criticism in Australia.

"I'm sure it'll survive," he says. "Everyone's got an opinion, sometimes before a film's even finished. But I think, as long as films survive, there'll be people interested in writing about them or broadcasting about them or in some way feeding information about them. I think it'll survive, but maybe in a different way."

On his enduring legacy, he notes that film is now a popular topic of everyday conversation.

"It used not to be like that. Maybe if I've helped contribute to that interest and discussion, maybe that's what I've achieved." ○

*David's selection of Ingmar Bergman's classic films will screen from June 6-14.*

# Is Ku-ring-gai Council 'Fit for the Future'?

Mayor Jennifer Anderson



**THE STATE GOVERNMENT'S** Fit for the Future reforms are arguably the biggest shake-up of NSW local government since 1993, when councils were corporatised by the Local Government Act. Fit for the Future asks councils to reflect genuinely on whether they can serve growing populations in the future, with 'scale and capacity' as a key benchmark, plus a range of financial indicators.

Broadly speaking, scale and capacity are the ability to govern effectively with a strong voice for the community. Councils are expected to provide a wide range of services and infrastructure to match population growth, while demonstrating sound finances, innovation and a strategic outlook. If councils cannot meet these benchmarks, they must consider merging with one or more councils.

Our Council firmly believes we can demonstrate scale and capacity and meet

all the required benchmarks to stand alone, without merging with Hornsby Shire Council.

Last year Ku-ring-gai Council won the Bluett Award – the highest award for local government in NSW. Ku-ring-gai has also been assessed by the NSW Treasury Corporation as being one of the 16 financially strongest councils in NSW out of 152. By any objective measure, we are one of the best performers in the state.

Our current population of 120 000 is projected to grow to 147 000 by 2031, nearing the size of some of the larger councils not required to merge under Fit for the Future.

Over the next five years we will spend \$123 million renewing infrastructure such as roads, footpaths and drainage. We have prepared a financial plan ensuring Ku-ring-gai ticks all the Government's boxes for financial sustainability. One

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of the tough decisions we have taken is to postpone the relocation of our administration centre to 828 Pacific Highway Gordon. This community asset, which the Council fully owns after buying out the lease, represents a prime investment in the Gordon town centre. The \$24 million saved by leasing out this building will now be put towards essential infrastructure.

For our ratepayers, there are two compelling arguments against merging with Hornsby. One is the lack of connectedness between our communities. The Shire is very different, with a large proportion of rural and riverside land. A merged council running from Roseville to Wisemans Ferry means decisions about development in Ku-ring-gai would be made at a distance, not helped by a reduction in local councillors representing Ku-ring-gai's interests.

The second argument is financial – our modelling has found that Ku-ring-gai ratepayers could feasibly pay up to 35% more in rates due to our higher land values. There is also the unresolved issue of Hornsby's disused quarry, which latest estimates put at \$50 million to remediate.

That is our view – now we need yours. You have until Friday 12 June to say whether you think Ku-ring-gai Council should stand alone or merge with Hornsby. You can complete a survey at [kmc.nsw.gov.au/fitforthefuture](http://kmc.nsw.gov.au/fitforthefuture) or at our customer service centre and libraries. You can also come to a community meeting at the Council Chambers, 818 Pacific Highway Gordon on Wednesday 3 June from 6.30pm. There has never been a more important time for councils in our area and we need to hear your opinions. ○

For more information visit [kmc.nsw.gov.au](http://kmc.nsw.gov.au)



## FIT FOR THE FUTURE COUNCIL REFORMS

Under the Fit for the Future reforms, all councils must submit a proposal to the NSW Government by 30 June 2015 showing that they can either stand alone, or need to merge with one or several councils.

Ku-ring-gai Council has prepared a case for standing alone as a council based on our financial strength and ability to serve our residents, both now and in the future.

**Your feedback is important and must be received by Friday 12 June 2015.** Here are the ways you can have your say:

- An independent research company will be phone polling randomly selected residents over the next few weeks. If you are called we encourage you to take part.
- Complete a 10-minute survey online at [kmc.nsw.gov.au/fitforthefuture](http://kmc.nsw.gov.au/fitforthefuture)
- Complete a 10-minute paper survey at our customer service centre at 818 Pacific Highway Gordon or at any Ku-ring-gai library
- Come to a community meeting on Wednesday 3 June at 6.30pm at Council Chambers 818 Pacific Highway Gordon. No RSVP needed.



## FIT FOR THE FUTURE

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[kmc.nsw.gov.au/fitforthefuture](http://kmc.nsw.gov.au/fitforthefuture)

# Women lose out

Stephanie Stefanovic

**THE GENDER PAY GAP** could have serious implications for women even after they retire.

According to Australian Super, the average woman in Australia retires with around half the superannuation funds of the average man. Greens MP Adam Bandt recently attempted to close this gap with the Sex Discrimination Amendment (Boosting Superannuation for Women) Bill 2014. The Abbott Government was not on board, however.

There may be other ways to bridge the gap. Spokesperson for the Coalition of Working Women, Claire Braund, says the answer is in the gender pay gap.

"Closing the gender pay gap would increase superannuation," Ms Braund says. She also notes the importance of the work system catching up to social changes over the past few decades.

"[The system] is based on the male

norm of working," she says. "The white Anglo-Saxon male aged 38 with two kids and a wife. We need an intelligent system that works with today's work and life patterns."

"It's absolutely imperative that the Government gets on top of this issue," Ms Braund says.

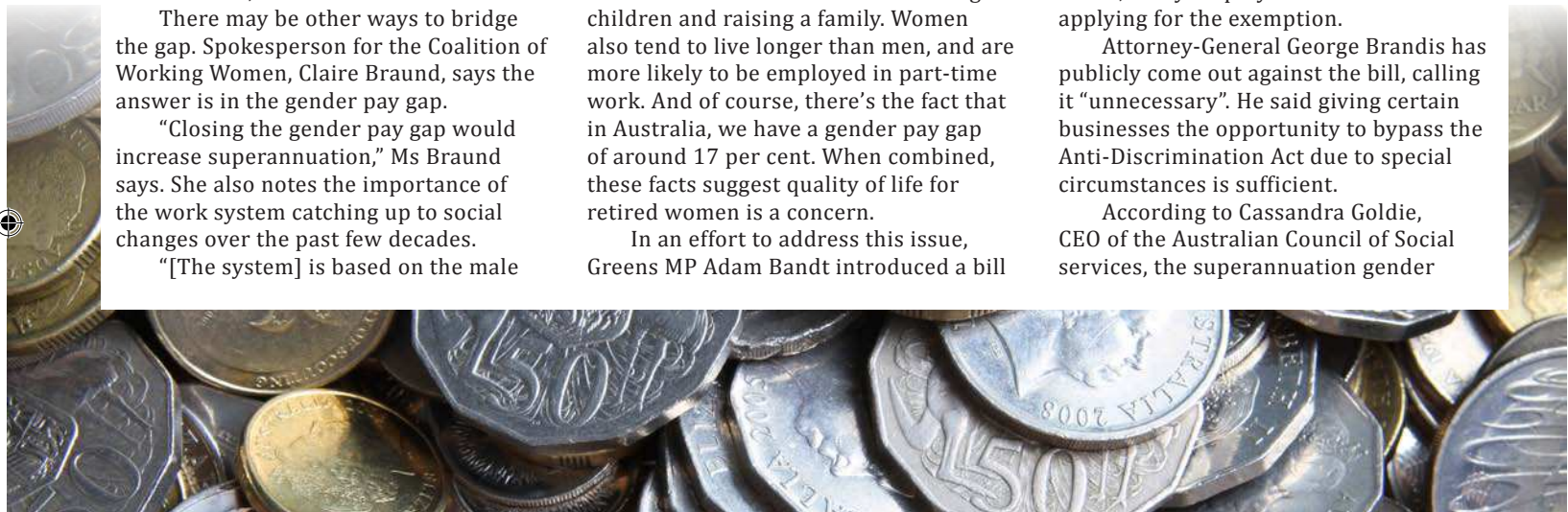
In thinking about women's retirement, it's worth considering that many women take breaks throughout their careers to concentrate on having children and raising a family. Women also tend to live longer than men, and are more likely to be employed in part-time work. And of course, there's the fact that in Australia, we have a gender pay gap of around 17 per cent. When combined, these facts suggest quality of life for retired women is a concern.

In an effort to address this issue, Greens MP Adam Bandt introduced a bill


in December 2014 which would act to change Australia's anti-discrimination laws. The Anti-Discrimination Act dictates that employers must pay an equal amount of superannuation to male and female employees, or else they will face legal punishment. Employers are able to apply for an exemption to this rule due to "special circumstances", but many find the conditions surrounding this are confusing and ambiguous. As a result, many employers are deterred from applying for the exemption.

Attorney-General George Brandis has publicly come out against the bill, calling it "unnecessary". He said giving certain businesses the opportunity to bypass the Anti-Discrimination Act due to special circumstances is sufficient.

According to Cassandra Goldie, CEO of the Australian Council of Social Services, the superannuation gender



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gap is worsened by many women's preoccupation with juggling work, children and domestic responsibilities. This leads women to neglect their superannuation fund, pushing it aside for later in life.

"We really do need to get better at thinking through our long-term plan and that's the challenge we all have - to be there for the kids, but also to be there for

ourselves over our lifetime," Ms Goldie says.

She also stresses the importance of creating awareness amongst Australian women and the public.

"How often do we hear politicians talking about this issue? Rarely. We need to be hearing more about it so women can connect with the big picture as well as the detail of their own lives." ○




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# New support for small business

Christian Berechree

## PRIME MINISTER TONY ABBOTT

may have famously described the 2015 budget as “dull”, but it’s turned out to be anything but boring for small business owners, thanks to a new incentive.

A \$5.5 billion small business and jobs package has been announced as a central part of this year’s budget. The package aims to support growth and job security in the small business sector. It is available to businesses with a yearly turnover of less than \$2 million.

NSW Treasurer, Gladys Berejiklian said the package was good news for small business owners and employees.

“We welcome tax relief for small business which will support the creation of jobs,” Ms Berejiklian said.

Alister Henskens, Member for Ku-ring-gai is also likely to welcome the changes. He cited the plight of small business owners as a major concern in his inaugural speech to Parliament.

“The butchers, fruiterers and other shop owners in our local shopping strips in Ku-ring-gai say that they are on the edge of oblivion after having traded successfully for 20 years or more,” Mr Henskens said.

“Despite their better products they need the help of government and, critically, the backing of our community if they are going to survive. If we want to keep the character of our suburbs intact,

the community needs to consciously support our local retailers and take more time to shop with them.”

According to Stephen Cartwright, chief executive of the NSW Business Chamber, the small business package addresses some key issues. He said Opposition Leader Bill Shorten’s response to the tax relief was encouraging.

**“It’s a great time for local businesses to take full advantage of the tax benefit announced by the Federal Treasurer.”**

“Access to finance for small business owners is the greatest impediment to establishing or expanding a business, and I congratulate the Federal Opposition for committing to a policy that will provide real benefit for SMEs and create new jobs,” Mr Cartwright said.

The tax relief is likely to have a varied impact on business owners, employees and consumers. According to Tim Wenden, proprietor of The Good Guys, Chatswood, the changes are likely to see a boom in the sale of appliances to the more than 13 000 small businesses in the area.

“Tax time is always a busy time of year for us and we often see a lot of local

family businesses stocking up for the year ahead,” Mr Wenden said. “It’s a great time for local businesses to take full advantage of the tax benefit announced by the Federal Treasurer.”

Trucking businesses are also set to benefit from the new tax benefits, according to the Australian Trucking Association (ATA). The majority of Australian trucking businesses fall under the \$2 million threshold.

“There are almost 49 000 trucking businesses in Australia. More than 45 000 come in under the \$2 million turnover threshold announced by the Government,” said Christopher Melham, ATA chief executive officer.

“These small businesses operate on tight margins, and the ATA welcomes this reduction in their tax burden,” Mr Melham said.

Support for the small business tax relief has been almost unanimous. However, Michael Corcoran, vice president of the Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) stresses the importance of strategic planning.

“Given the significant challenges facing Australia, the Government needs to get serious about making the difficult changes necessary to support future growth. Failure to do so soon will put Australia’s future prosperity at risk,” Mr Corcoran said. ○

# Australia at risk

Hope William-Smith

**IF YOU HAVE** been wondering what is behind Sydney's unusual weather, a recent report from the Climate Council may help shed some light.

There has already been a recorded increase in global temperature in recent years, making extreme weather events in Australia significantly worse. The number of hot days have doubled in the last 50 years and freak weather occurrences, such as the recent Sydney storms have increased noticeably in recent years. The Climate Council Institute has released information linking the destruction from the Sydney storms with climate change. The report makes a connection between rising temperatures and the industrial revolution in the 19th century.

"Global sea level has already risen by about 20cm since the mid-19th century due to the warming of our oceans and melting ice sheets," Professor Will Steffen of the Climate Council said.

"This means storm surges are riding on higher levels and have increased the damage when they hit land.

"As sea levels continue to rise, the extent of the damage caused by flooding will only get worse."

The report also considers the consequences of a temperature rise on the Earth System. In response to scientific warnings that rising global temperatures have potentially catastrophic consequences for humanity, governments around the world have committed to keep global temperature rise to no higher than 2°C above the average temperature before the industrial age.

The report indicates that most of the world's fossil fuels must be left in the ground to prevent the global temperature from rising. In order to maintain that, almost two thirds of the worlds fossil fuel including oil, coal and gas reserves must be left in the ground, unburned.

There is also the suggestion that meeting the carbon budget successfully has potential benefits for the Australian economy.

"If we want to do our fair share to tackle climate change, not only can we not

develop any new coal mines but we also have to have a planned phase-out of our existing fossil fuel extraction and usage," Professor Steffen said. Upgrading power stations with more modern renewable energy sources will be possible, in addition to shifting industries to low-carbon products and production methods.

The Climate Change Authority recommended an increase in Australia's post-2020 emissions reduction targets. Professor Steffen said the devastation caused by the storms in NSW underpinned the importance of this.

"Australia can't afford to be a free rider on this issue because of the wealthiest countries in the world, we are the most vulnerable to climate change," he said. ○

*The Climate Council is an independent, crowd-funded organization providing information about climate change to the Australian public.*

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# Teaching put to the test

Victoria Ticha

**AROUND ONE MILLION** students participated in the National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) this May. Every year, thousands of parents end up paying big for private tutors, books and online resources in a bid to boost their child's scores.

Results are published on the My School website. The scores have become valuable marketing strategies, encouraging parents to enrol their children into high achieving schools. The long-term effect may be that talented teachers end up working in high performing private schools instead of low performing public schools where they are most needed.

According to Robert Randall, chief executive of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), the tests aren't just about high scores. He says they are a valuable way of measuring success and encouraging student progress.

"NAPLAN's purpose is to identify, as early as possible, a child's strengths and areas for development, to make sure they are progressing in literacy and numeracy," Mr Randall says.

Without NAPLAN data it would be difficult to tell where students stand

nationally and internationally.

"It is also indisputable that NAPLAN provides parents and carers with an individual report, showing their child's results and a national comparison of their child's performance against other Australian students in their year level," Robyn Ziino, ACARA director of communications says.

ACARA acknowledges that NAPLAN generates debate amongst parents and education professionals each year. Dr Jihyun Lee, educational psychologist from the University of New South Wales says "I generally agree with the public view that NAPLAN does not tell anything new to students, teachers, and school communities. Given that the national academic achievement in PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) has gone down internationally, NAPLAN, which measures the 'minimum' student ability per grade does not seem to facilitate student learning."

So while NAPLAN has some positive uses, it is arguably plagued by negative impacts on learning and student well-being. "At this point I would prefer NAPLAN to employ sampling and not all kids, not all schools sit in for NAPLAN so that the unnecessary burden of testing

and comparison can be reduced across the country" says Dr Lee.

Finland, the country with the highest ranking education, promotes social and economic equality by excluding standardised and high stakes testing in schools. Instead the country encourages learning through extracurricular activities. According to Lenard Gadil, education student from the University of New South Wales, a good education system should have the interests of the child as its central focus.

Mr Gadil says in systems dominated by high-stakes standardised testing, the interests of the child appear to be overshadowed by the competing interests of other stakeholders.

"An overemphasis on standardised testing is an overemphasis on product rather than process, competition rather than equity, high scores rather than deeper, critical learning" says Mr Gadil.

For now, the best preparation for a student, Ms Ziino says, is for them "to attend school and for teachers to teach the curriculum". ACARA has acknowledged that NAPLAN generates debate and continues to adjust the tests every year in response to concerns about teachers teaching to the test. ○

# Doing the maths

Christian Berechree

## Mathematics and science could become compulsory in senior high school under a new Government scheme.

**THEY'RE NOT EVERYONE'S** favourite subjects and they set many students to groaning and complaining. However, mathematics and science could be about to become compulsory subjects for senior high school students.

Under a new scheme proposed by Education Minister Christopher Pyne, mathematics and science would be compulsory for students in years 11 and 12. Minister Pyne raised the changes in response to a declining number of students studying maths and science in senior school. He also pointed out that Australia's international testing results in these areas have slipped in recent years, highlighted by the most recent Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) test results.

The PISA test results showed a slip in Australia's global mathematics ranking from 15th to 19th. In science the nation fell from 10th to 16th. There is also concern about an apparent gender disparity in STEM subject engagement, with females under represented.

Education experts have raised concerns about the proposed changes, however. According to Professor Dianne Siemon, a leading professor of mathematics education at RMIT, making the subjects compulsory would not lead to improved results. Instead, she is worried that compulsory learning would dilute interest even further.

"This is hardly likely to lead to increased Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM)

engagement," Professor Siemon says.

Professor Siemon says investigation into the reasons for reduced engagement is required. She says engagement with mathematics and science needs to begin at a young age if it is to continue throughout secondary school.

"We need to look much more closely at what is happening in mathematics in the middle years," she says.

"Our data shows that a significant proportion of year 8 students do not have the necessary pre-requisite knowledge and confidence to meaningfully proceed with secondary school mathematics." ○

*For more information about PISA results, visit [oecd.org/pisa](http://oecd.org/pisa)*



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# The ATAR problem

Hope William-Smith

**IF MARK ZUCKERBURG**, Steve Jobs and Bill Gates found success without tertiary education, how crucial are your ATAR and choice of university really going to be?

Every year, between 70 000 and 80 000 students in NSW alone complete their final year of school. From this group approximately 28 000 will apply for tertiary education at an Australian university. For many applicants, the main priorities are a high ATAR score and the reputation of the university they apply to. However, just as it can't be assumed that an ATAR reflects how challenging a course is, it also cannot be assumed that universities that offer courses with lower entrance marks reflect this in the quality of their graduates.

The variation in required ATAR scores between universities in NSW is not only extreme but often perplexing. The ATAR cut-off for a Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Commerce was 98.00 at Sydney University in 2015, but only 58.50 to study the same course at the Australian Catholic University. A Bachelor of Business at The University of New South Wales requires a high ATAR of 96.00, but a mark of 65.00 is enough for the same degree at The

University of Western Sydney and Charles Sturt University.

Sydney University head of undergraduate recruitment Kaveh Ghezel attributes the high ATARs at Sydney University to the limited places it has, due to the popularity stemming from its high academic standing and reputation as a top 40 world university.

Mr Ghezel says all the degrees offered at Sydney University are "of the highest standard". He says students should do their research to find a university specialising in the subject area they want to study. Mr Ghezel believes Sydney University graduates have an advantage because the university's reputation has secured confidence with employers. He says students "want to do those degrees" that Sydney University can offer, as the university is "known for its academic excellence" and prestige.

ACU Vice Chancellor Greg Craven agrees that ATAR cut-offs are determined strictly by "supply and demand for that course" at a given time, rather than being a reflection of course quality. He points out that Australian Catholic University graduates are equipped for success due to the high level of "practical and ethical

preparation for the workplace" they receive. This is reflected in their graduate employment statistics, with close to 93 per cent of graduates securing some form of employment within four months of graduation.

For the majority of universities that keep their ATARs intentionally high, it can be considered a mark of exclusivity for institutions that are more than one hundred years old or have a history of producing highly successful graduates. UNSW placed a minimum ATAR of 80.00 across all courses offered in 2015 and a majority of courses at Sydney University, established in 1855, require an ATAR of more than 90.00. The average ATAR requirement at ACU still remains at around just 60.00.

If this is the case, perhaps the choice of university is not as crucial as once thought. With such an extensive range of choices for high school graduates, it appears that ATAR and university choice may play only a small role in future success. ○

*For more information about university entrance requirements, visit [uac.edu.au](http://uac.edu.au)*





# Gazing into the Future



Mrs Megan Krimmer, Roseville College Principal

**WHEN PEOPLE DISCUSS** the future of education, technological developments are often the first topic of conversation. Yes, technology has advanced exponentially in the last decade and it will continue to do so. And yes, it is very powerful and it can really enhance learning. It is wonderful to see students so engaged in their learning when using their devices. Technology allows our students to communicate with experts around the world, delve into challenging and interesting articles from university libraries and find out all manner of things with just the click of a button.

There is, unfortunately, a dark side to technology. It can be distracting or addictive, and we are all aware of the dangers lurking in cyber space. In this, parents must be vigilant and keep on top of technological developments. We do need to know what our children are doing online. I know this can be difficult but there is a lot of help available for this. Your child's school will be able to point you in the right direction and the ACMA website is particularly helpful.

As many experts acknowledge, we should not be afraid to limit screen time. Our children need time to communicate face-to-face and spend time with others without using devices. At school too,

devices should only be used when they enhance learning. My mantra is 'do not use technology for technology's sake'. If learning is enhanced by it, use it. If it isn't, don't.

No matter what technological devices may be available to enhance learning in the future, the future of education will always be about our young people and their learning. We want our students to see themselves as deep thinkers who love learning. We also want to continue to offer rigorous and challenging learning experiences for all. Students should develop an international perspective, and skills such as creativity, innovation, problem solving, collaboration, communication, connectedness, adaptability and flexibility.

In any thinking about future learning experiences, relationships remain the key. Teachers are highly trained professionals who will continue to assist young people to learn and navigate their way around all technology has to offer. The real danger of the use of technology in education is the possibility of creating an isolated educational experience for our young people. The idea of children sitting at home by themselves and learning online all day should not part of the 'future learning' picture.

It is important that the 'social' not be removed in future. Classrooms may look different and classes may run differently. There might be large group activities, small group seminars, cross-age and cross-disciplinary approaches, blended learning, and so on. The point is, classes will still be running.

As future leaders of our society, our young people need to develop essential knowledge, skills and understanding. They will also need to develop into people of fine character, integrity and wisdom. Schools are not just places where students learn the '3 R's'. They never have been and they shouldn't be..

At Roseville College, we work alongside girls and their families to help our students grow in understanding about who they are, how they think and how they live. These, together with a rigorous and challenging curriculum that prepares our girls for the demands of the HSC and the skills needed for the 21st Century world, are part of how we are engaging in 'future learning' at our school. ○

*Visit [acma.gov.au](http://acma.gov.au) for more information and resources.*

# Sydney storm clean up

Stephanie Stefanovic

**THE RECENT STORMS** may be over, but the after-effects of floods can be just as damaging as the initial impact. Here is a guide to help you figure out what to do about storm damage in your home.

## What to look out for:

### Damaged floors

Buckling, cracking and curving at the edges of flooring are most likely signs of water damage.

In this case, you will need to start by removing any excess moisture from the floor. This can be done using a wet vacuum, fans or dehumidifiers. If the floor is still damaged after it has dried, you will need to strip it down to the subfloor. If you have a plywood subfloor, you will likely need to replace it. In the case of a concrete subfloor, you will simply need to make sure it is dry using the methods above. Once the subfloor is dry it can be covered with new flooring.

### Mould and mildew

If you notice a room with a musty odour or any fuzzy, discoloured growths, chances are you have mould. It is important that you act immediately to remove the mould, as it can lead to serious health complications.

When removing mould, wear protective gear such as gloves, goggles and a face mask. You should also make sure the room is well-ventilated. Once the affected area is dry, disinfect and clean with a detergent, vinegar or alcohol solution. Store-bought treatments may bleach mould, but they do not always kill it. Dealing with mould can be dangerous, so if the mould is severe, seek professional help.

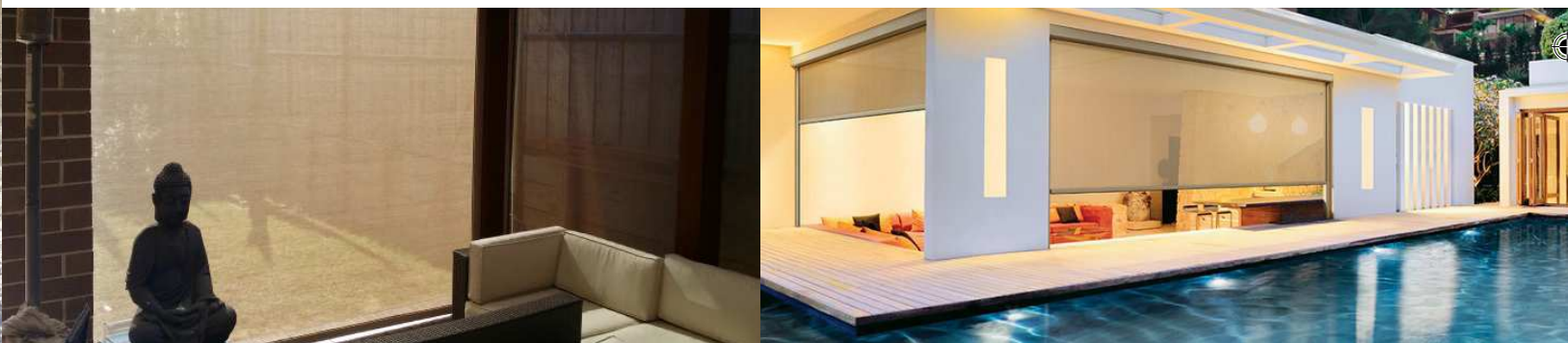
### Damaged walls or ceilings

Water damage can cause walls and ceilings to fail. Severe signs of damage include warping and buckling walls, and sagging ceilings. Soft, spongy surfaces are also a problem. More minor signs of damage include the separation, blistering or peeling of wall surfaces.

In the case of water-damaged walls or ceilings, you will need to remove all wet material including insulation, wood and other porous materials. The best method for drying walls is natural ventilation. Drywall is extremely porous, so it will most likely need to be replaced once the wall has dried out. If your walls are made with plaster (as is common in many older homes), you may be in luck. Unless the damage is severe, you can simply remove the damaged sections with a putty knife, apply a primer and re-plaster.



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# Winter fashion



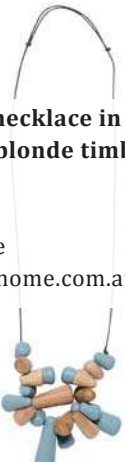
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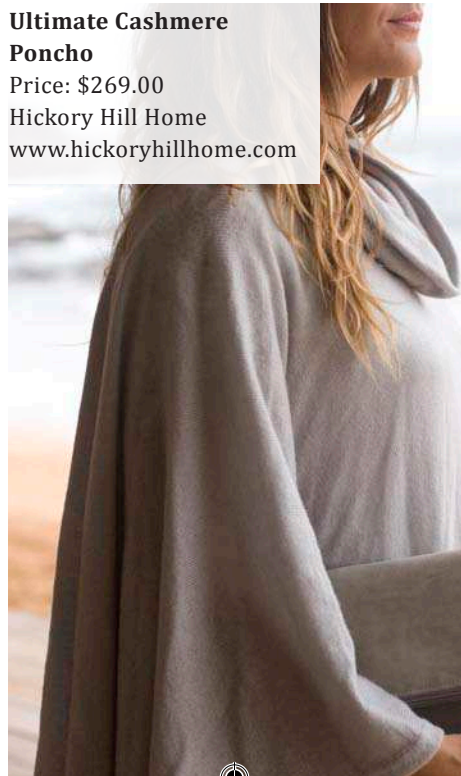


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# Growing plants in dropping temperatures

Rohan Parker

**I'VE HEARD IT** said the garden is an uninspiring place in winter.

I don't find it so. All you need to do is take a walk around the neighbourhood or your local botanic gardens and you will see plants flowering or showing off what makes them interesting in winter. If you look out for the right plant groups you're sure to find something that suits the climate of your garden.

Winter can be a really busy time and if you make the most of it you can set yourself and your garden up for the rest of the year. Remember those garden projects you thought of during summer and didn't have the time to complete? Here's your chance.

## Soil preparation

Good soil preparation is key for anything you plan to plant. Dig deep and turn the soil up to the sky. The cold weather will help break the soil clods down and make the soil easier to dig. Add

cow manure and compost. Also consider blood and bone and maybe some dolomite if it suits the plants you want to grow.

## Winter fertilising

Plants need food in winter too. Liquid feeding is readily absorbed by plants and helps them fend off the lurgy that the cold can bring. The lawn and just about every other plant you can see will love a boost.

Use a liquid fertiliser with plenty of potash – its the regulator in the world of plants. It balances the flow of water and other nutrients through a plant, from roots to leaves and flowers.

Potash helps plants create healthy growth and naturally resist pest and diseases and even strengthens plants in cold, dry or wet conditions.

Once your soil is prepared and the garden is ready, it's time to fill it with plants that thrive at this time of year. Here are some plant groups to look out for that love the cold.

## Succulents

I love winter succulents like sempervivium and echeveria. They can look very stylish when planted in the right containers and grouped together, or when combined with flowering annuals such as pansy, viola or alyssum.

## Camellias

Look for the miniature hybrids or species. Little Jen, Baby Bear, Sinensis, Sweet Jane and Wirlinga Bride all work beautifully at this time of year.

## Annuals

Winter annuals are the best. Pansy, viola, primula and poppy...I could go on. Create stunning pot displays by grouping similar coloured containers together and filling them with a combination of annuals and bulbs. Use best quality potting mix and fertilise regularly.

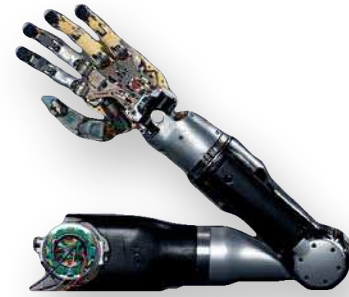
Plan and make the most of winter. I will admit that it is harder to find the beauty but it is there if you look for it.

*Rohan Parker is manager of Parkers of Turramurra nursery. To contact Parkers of Turramurra, please call (02) 9487 3888.*



# Health corner

Anya Treurnicht and Christian Berechree



## “LUCKY IRON FISH” TACKLES ANAEMIA

A Canadian researcher has come up with a simple method for combating anaemia: a small iron fish. The fish is boiled in water with lemon and when the solution is drunk it provides almost 75 per cent of the recommended adult iron intake, and close to 100 per cent of the amount required by children.

Anaemia is one of the most widespread nutritional disorders in the world, affecting around one third of the population. The Lucky Iron Fish has seen dramatic results in Cambodia already, with instances of anaemia almost halved.



## BREAKTHROUGH IN PAIN RESEARCH

Canadian scientists have come up with a revolutionary new way of testing drugs for pain and other neurological conditions. Using millions of engineered blood cells, researchers can now take easy-to-obtain blood samples and create specialised cell types for any patient.

The process involves converting human blood cells to central and peripheral nervous system neurons. This breakthrough will allow researchers to examine how a person reacts to stimuli such as heat, cold and pain just by using blood samples. This could greatly increase medical understanding of pain and how to treat it.

## NEW HOPE FOR AMPUTEES

Researchers in Iceland have developed revolutionary new technology allowing amputees to control bionic limbs with their minds.

The technology is the first of its kind in the world. It involves implanting sensors into tissue near the amputation site. The sensors read and interpret brain signals, allowing the amputee to move the bionic limb independently. The technology is already so advanced that participants in a trial were about to move the limbs subconsciously.

“As soon as I put my foot on, it took me about 10 minutes to get control of it. I could stand up and just walk away,” said Gummi Olafsson, one of the first people to trial the new technology.

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# Dental care for patients with special needs



Dr Ian Sweeney

**DENTAL CARE FOR** patients with special needs is as imperative as it is for the rest of the population. We often see that patients with special needs have their dental care neglected because of the numerous complex issues that arise in providing dental care to patients with various physical, intellectual or behavioural disabilities.

As a minimum, everyone needs twice daily brushing and flossing. This simple process can sometimes be impossible for a parent or carer to carry out adequately in an uncooperative child or adult. If dental care is neglected, the end result is likely to be dental decay and or gum disease. If left untreated, these diseases may lead to

serious infections, which may ultimately be life threatening. Pain from dental disease and infection may exacerbate or cause challenging behaviours, particularly when a person is unable to communicate adequately.

It is therefore imperative that patients with special needs receive regular dental treatment at a facility that specifically caters for their often complex and challenging requirements.

Today there are numerous techniques available to ensure that all patients are able to access dental care appropriate to their needs. This may include various forms of behavioural management and the use of conscious sedation.

Conscious sedation is an easy and

effective way to provide treatment, from routine examination and cleaning to more complex treatment procedures.

For those patients with more complex physical or medical conditions, we are able to provide treatment under general anaesthesia in a hospital setting.

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# Australian men, let's talk

John Seroukas

**THE HEALTH OF** Australian males is one of the biggest elephants in the room that we need to address.

It's so big, in fact, that suicide is the most common cause of death in males aged between 15 and 24, according to the Black Dog Institute.

With Men's Health Week coming up from 15-21 June, there has never been a better time to help our men.

"Most men are happy to roll up their sleeves once you engage with them," said Gary Green, founding member and community engagement officer of men's health group the Australian Men's Sheds Association (AMSA).

"Once they meet you and get the conversation going, they're happy to talk," Mr Green said.

And that's often the problem – getting them to the doctor's office in the first place.

Between the ages of 25-34, women are twice as likely as men to see their GP more than 12 times per year.

The older men get, the more likely they are to attend the GP – but it could already be too late.

"From my observation, I think blokes take a 'head in the sand' attitude," said Mr Green. "They saw their uncles with a

condition 50 years ago which made their lives worse. They think the same will happen to them."

With this in mind, AMSA have developed a program called Spanner in the Works? (SITW).

The name, Mr Green says, derives from something most men can relate to.

"While we regularly service our vehicles, we don't service ourselves," said Mr Green. "Spanner in the Works is about looking after yourself, rather than looking after your car."

The program aims to reach out to men, offering them succinct and accurate assessments at local Men's Sheds.

Men's Shed community members are also invited to receive a check-up from participating nurses.

"We need to recognise blokes are different to women. To engage men, health-wise, we need a different approach. A male-friendly approach," said Mr Green.

"We tend to over-inform males about health. They want the guts of it and quick," he said.

This is exactly what SITW does. Nurses are instructed to give no more than four pieces of information to patients – anything more would defeat

the programme's purpose.

Health brochures distributed at Men's Sheds are an amalgamation of warnings from several foundations.

The brochures follow the same four-point formula as the check-ups, making men more likely to read and learn about their health.

The success of AMSA's initiatives are phenomenal. Their sheds reach approximately 150 000 males across Australia, making them the biggest men's health representative in Australia.

In light of this success, sheds have been established across the UK and Ireland, New Zealand, Canada and the USA, all tailored to their respective community's needs.

As well as not-for-profit initiatives, there has also been nationwide funding by the Government. \$3.29 billion was spent on 46 men's health programmes between 2012-2013.

Most recently, the National Mental Health Commission conducted the National Review of mental Health Programmes and Services. The review provides 25 recommendations within nine strategic directions, aimed at implementing a successful framework for the next decade.



# Strike a pose

Arti Kumria

**WE'VE ALL READ** about the benefits of yoga. Flexibility, strength, endurance, energy and an incredibly calming effect on the body and mind. But what about world peace? It's possible.

Consider the effect of millions of people de-stressing and detoxing at the same time. Besides better individual health, a period of global harmony could be the result.

At least that's the hope of India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the brains behind the International Day of Yoga. The day aims to celebrate the ancient physical, mental and spiritual practice. Prime Minister Modi called for making yoga "a mass movement to connect people and

strengthen the bonds of humanity".

On 21 June, the world will mark the first International Day of Yoga after Modi pitched for it in his maiden address to the UN General Assembly in September 2014. Modi is an enthusiastic yoga practitioner who credits it with giving him energy so that he needs only a few hours of sleep each night. The idea found overwhelming support, with a record 175 nations co-sponsoring the subsequent UN resolution that promotes the importance of healthier choices and lifestyles.

India is leading celebrations for its ancient gift to the world. In a mass demonstration in New Delhi, an estimated 45 000 Indians will perform a 35-minute

exercise session including 15 yogic postures to highlight how the practice "provides a holistic approach to health and wellbeing". In the process, the event may enter the Guinness Book of World Records for the largest yoga demonstration at a single venue.

In Australia, 21 June is the winter solstice – the shortest day of the year in the southern hemisphere. As the days become longer and darkness turns to light, it is traditionally a time of rebirth and restoration. Yoga has this power, too. Now, as the celebration and solstice coincide on 21 June, a strengthened sense of renewal may be the turning point in global health and harmony we've all been waiting for.



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# Foods to fight colds

Stephanie Stefanovic

**IT'S COLD SEASON** again. As the weather gets colder and the nights get longer, it seems like everybody's getting sick. Here are some foods to help fight off colds and their symptoms.

## Honey

Honey has been used for centuries in the prevention and treatment of cold and flu. With an abundance of antioxidant, antibacterial and antimicrobial properties, honey works to fight off the cold virus and its symptoms.

## Dark chocolate

Finally, a good excuse to treat yourself to your favourite snack. Cocoa contains a chemical called theobromine which helps fight off the symptoms of colds by blocking the sensory nerves. If you want to enjoy the benefits of cocoa, stick to a bite-sized portion of chocolate with a cocoa content of 70% or higher.

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### Oily fish

Fish like salmon, tuna, mackerel and trout are rich in omega-3 fatty acids. This can help reduce harmful inflammation in the body which can affect the functioning of the immune system.

### Leafy greens

The darker the greens, the higher the nutrient content. Go for vegetables like spinach, broccoli, kale or bok choy. These vegetables are full of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants which support general health and immunity.



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# Slow cooking season

Alex Dalland

Winter means slow cooking. Here's a recipe for a winter warmer that's sure to be a family favourite.

## Slow-cooked lamb shanks with chorizo

**LAMB SHANKS** HAVE long been a slow cooker favourite, but this recipe from Beef & Lamb Australia adds an interesting twist. The chorizo spices up the lamb and adds a delicious smoky flavour.

### Ingredients

8 lamb shanks (french-trimmed with ends of bone exposed)  
 1 small onion, finely chopped  
 2 chorizo sausages (roughly 250g) cut into 1 cm slices  
 2 cups tomato pasta sauce  
 1 cup beef stock  
 1 tsp ground oregano leaves  
 400g can white beans, rinsed and drained  
 ¼ cup finely chopped parsley  
 steamed green beans (to serve)

### Method

1. Brush the lamb shanks with some oil. Heat a large frying pan over medium-high heat, and brown the lamb shanks well on all sides. Remove and place in the slow cooker.
2. Place the onion and the chorizo into the slow cooker. Add the tomato pasta sauce, beef stock and the ground oregano.
3. Cover the slow cooker and cook ingredients on Low for 8-10 hours or on High for 4-5 hours. Add beans and parsley in the last half hour of cooking.



# Winter road trip

Victoria Ticha

**THIS WINTER, LOCK** all the windows, set your status to “away” and celebrate the new season.

A strong cold front delivered large amounts of snow across parts of south-eastern NSW as soon as winter hit. It's becoming increasingly hard to ignore the sting of early morning frost and late night chills.

Rather than fight the cold, why not embrace the winter by journeying to where the season has truly begun to bloom? With the weather cooling and winter well underway approaching, now

is the perfect time to start planning a weekend away. There are plenty of places not far from Sydney that offer a perfect escape in the colder months. So rug up, pack the car, fetch the hot water bottles and get the thermos ready. You're going for a drive.

Three hours north of Sydney will lead you to an unspoilt wilderness where the winter season has truly begun to flourish. The heritage-listed Barrington Tops National Park is the ultimate weekend retreat for lovers of nature. Well away from the busy slopes of Perisher and

Thredbo, the temperate rainforests of Barrington Tops which form part of the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia World Heritage Area are a perfect destination for a serene weekend away.

You can plan a tour or brave the stunning rock formations, lookouts, waterfalls, and unique flora and fauna on your own. Whether you choose to stay in a cottage by the river, indulge the family in a farmstay, or simply relax in a guesthouse, Barrington Tops offers a scenic alternative to staying indoors and suffering through the biting cold.

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# Clairvoyant Kerrie



Kerrie Erwin

**Hailey**  
March 1994

**Do you think my career will be successful? Will it be what I am hoping for?**

Hailey, I see you as a very ambitious and courageous individual with quite a stubborn streak. Whatever you set your mind to, you will accomplish as long as you stay grounded.

Don't put too much pressure on yourself. Balance is the key word for you!

Once you have an idea of what you want and have laid the right foundation your wishes for your life and career will be carried out. The right career for you entails a great deal of responsibility and importance. I also see you travelling and working hard to get up the ladder.

You have the power within to make changes in the world so long as you believe in yourself and persevere. Your opportunities for recognition and success are better than average.

This year is good for study and work but not so successful for your love life.

When people want to leave your life, let them. No use stressing over spilt milk.

*I've been told about balancing things before, so I'll keep an eye on it. Thanks Kerrie!*

**Jack**  
December 1996

**Where will I be in 5 years' time?**

Being a very emotional person it is important for you to know exactly what you want. Life is too short and you do not want to waste time. Always remember to use your charm. It will always get you out of difficulty as few people will be able to resist you and what you want.

Security is very important for you so it is important to have a good job as you love beautiful things and love to indulge.

You may decide to travel overseas as this has always been part of your dreams. Sometimes life may seem hard and that is why your family is very important for you.

This is a successful year for you but I see changes around the work front.

You need also to watch your legs. Remember to stay healthy and fit. Being around water has a big effect around you.

*Thank you! I'll keep being charming.*

**Ruth**  
June 1964

**Will I get a job soon?**

I see a lot of frustration around you but perseverance is the key! I see you getting a job as you have had endings around you. It may not be exactly what you want and may be in connection with an office.

Sometimes it is good to take what comes so you can make changes later for a better future in the long run. You have many changes on many levels this year so it feels like you are in a time of transformation.

Stay positive. You have a woman in spirit around you who was like a mum who is looking after you. I am being told you are very strong and capable of many things, but do not let others use you.

Stop worrying and remember life is about lessons and learning. I see a breakthrough before August.

Keep the faith.

Blessings and love, Kerrie.

*Dear Kerrie, this is very helpful. I completely agree.*

# Home sweet home

With the Government's push for retirement and aged care providers to look to the consumer to direct the type of services that seniors want, a sense of home is one of the major factors most consumers are really looking for.

The feeling of home is as diverse as the many individuals seeking retirement and aged care services – be it independent living, residential care or the care you might need in your own home.

For many of us, home starts with the little things, from a place that feels welcoming and warm to a place that reflects our individual personality or preferences.

The perfect chance to experience these little things is Friday 19 June. Visit an open day at UnitingCare on the Northern Beaches and North Shore.

*Go to [www.unitingcareageing.org.au/opacity](http://www.unitingcareageing.org.au/opacity) for location details.*



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# 22 May - 8 June

## 6 June

**World Environment Day Festival**  
Saturday June 6th 10am - 4pm  
**Where:** Hornsby Mall, corner of Florence and Hunter Streets, Hornsby  
**Cost:** Free  
**Contact:** caguesse@hornsby.nsw.gov.au

**Light Show - MCA Sydney**  
May 22nd - June 8th  
**Where:** Museum of Contemporary Art, 140 George St, The Rocks  
**Cost:** Adult \$20, concession \$15, youth \$10, family \$50  
**Contact:** reception@mca.com.au

## 4 June

**Helping Your Learner Driver Workshop**  
Thursday June 4th 6:30pm-8pm  
**Where:** Ku-ring-gai Council Chambers, Level 3, 818 Pacific Highway, Gordon  
**Cost:** Free  
**Contact:** kmc@kmc.nsw.gov.au

# 3 June - 14 June

**Sydney Film Festival**  
June 3rd - 14th  
**Where:** Sydney City (various locations)  
**Cost:** Starts from \$110  
**Contact:** tickets@sff.org.au

## 4 June

**Talks@Willoughby presents Ross Gittins**  
Thursday June 4th 12:30pm  
**Where:** Chatswood Library, 409 Victoria Ave, Chatswood  
**Cost:** Free  
**Contact:** library@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

## 18 June

**Taronga Dinner**  
June 18th 6:30pm  
**Where:** Ivy Ballroom, George Street, Sydney  
**Cost:** \$300 per person  
**Contact:** tarongafoundation@zoo.nsw.gov.au

# 28 June - 1 July

**Great North Walk, Stage Five: Mt Ku-Ring-Gai to Berowra**  
June 28th and July 1st, 8:30am-4pm  
**Where:** Berowra Valley National Park, Berowra  
**Cost:** Adults \$15, children \$10  
**Contact:** kmc@kmc.nsw.gov.au

# 29 June - 3 July

**Active Kids sports school holiday program**  
June 29th - July 3rd 8am - 6pm  
**Where:** West Lindfield Community Hall, 2-10 Bradfield Road, West Lindfield  
**Cost:** \$50 per day per child, \$40 per day for additional siblings, \$10 for extended hours  
**Contact:** recreationbookings@kmc.nsw.gov.au

# 16 May - 12 July

**2015 Guringai Festival**  
May 16th - July 12th  
**Where:** Northern Beaches (various locations)  
**Cost:** Free  
**Contact:** acryer@hornsby.nsw.gov.au



# Community noticeboard

## Australia's Biggest Morning Tea

June 11th, 10-11:30am

**Where:** St John's Anglican Church, 6 Royston Parade, Asquith

**Contact:** 0419 200 809

## The Great Market

June 21st, 10am-3pm

**Where:** East Lindfield Community Centre Hall, 9 Wellington Road, East Lindfield

**Contact:** jacqui@thatgreatmarket.com.au or <http://www.facebook.com/thatgreatmarket>

## Jewish Museum tour

Monday, June 29th at 10:45am

**Where:** Departing from Marian Street Theatre, 2 Marian Street, Killara

**Contact:** [bookings.kmc.nsw.gov.au/CoursesAndEvents/account](http://bookings.kmc.nsw.gov.au/CoursesAndEvents/account)

## Peter Pan youth production

June 27th - July 11th

**Where:** The Knox Business Studies Centre Auditorium, Pacific Highway, Wahroonga

**Contact:** [tickets4me.com.au](http://tickets4me.com.au)

## Divestment and sustainable super

June 17th, 6:30-8pm

**Where:** Council Chambers, Level 3, 818 Pacific Highway, Gordon

**Contact:** [sustainability@kmc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sustainability@kmc.nsw.gov.au)

## Itsy Bitsy Babies

Tuesdays from 10-10:30am

**Where:** Gordon Library, 799 Pacific Highway, Gordon

**Contact:** [gordon.library@kmc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:gordon.library@kmc.nsw.gov.au)

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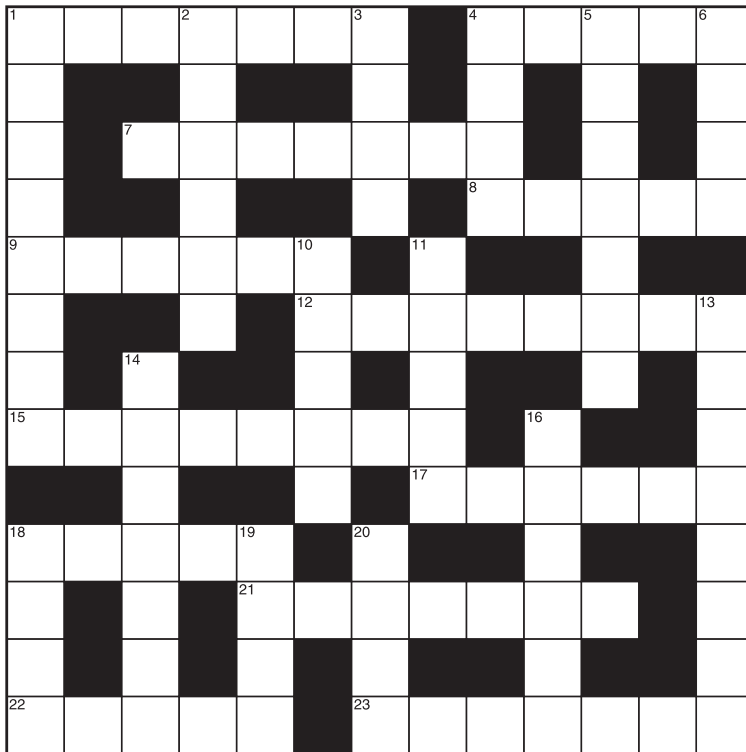
# Puzzles

**ACROSS**

1. Chinese river
4. Hollow
7. Least attractive
8. Declare
9. Small celestial body
12. Speeches
15. People taken from danger
17. Cured
18. Cite author
21. Acted in response
22. Defined regions
23. Gloomier

**DOWN**

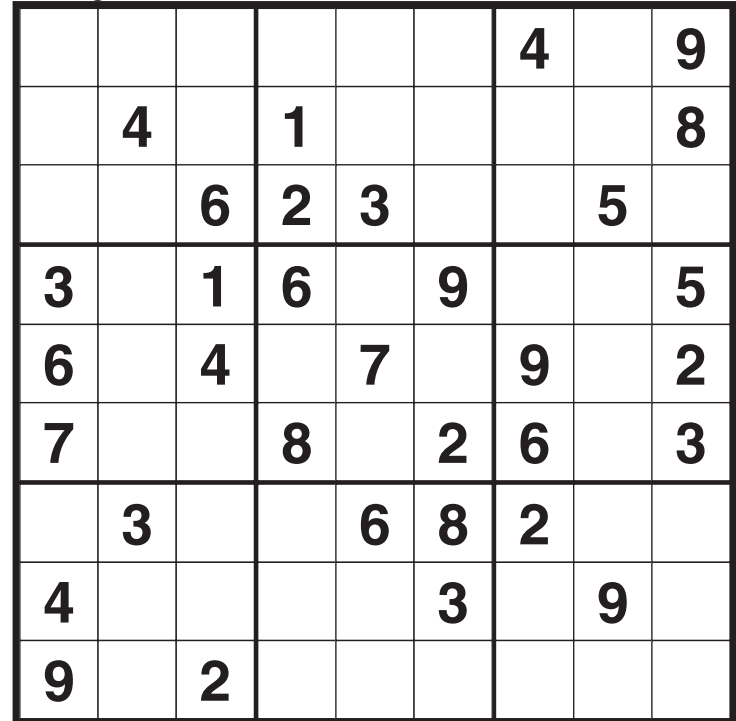
1. Californian National Park
2. Choked
3. Equal
4. Consumes food
5. Self-contradiction
6. Ox harness
10. Actor's parts
11. Grating
13. Poorer quality
14. Wool fat
16. Photographer's tool
18. Trivia test
19. Periods of time
20. Door frame post



# SUDOKU

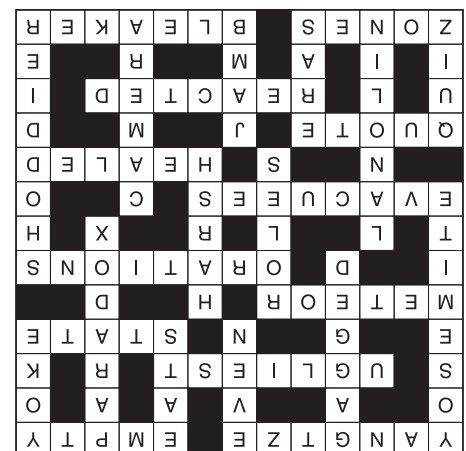
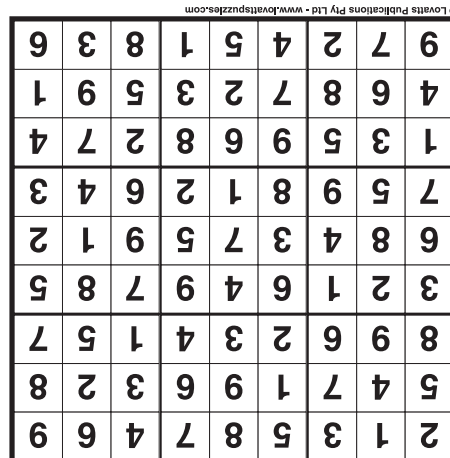
Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9.

Rating: ★ ★ ☆ ☆ ☆



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