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- A Japanese woofing story • Tom's leg
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COLLECTIVE BARGAINING COULD GET US ALL A BETTER DEAL

Here you are — sorry it's late. Ha, that's how I started the last editorial so nothing new there. In fact I've managed to increase my lateness two-fold and hence, I'm ashamed to admit, this issue is Spring too, just like BWD Number 9.

A year zipped by but what a year it was. In the last issue I was but a servant of the people in my day job, but now with the deckchairs having been re-stencilled with QPRC on the back, I've lost my epaulettes.

Of the nine Palerang and ten Queanbeyan councillors, eight of us have been appointed by the Office of Local Government to a Local Representation Committee — and the ex-mayor of Queanbeyan Tim Overall, has been appointed Administrator until the elections in September 2017.

Although the LRC has no executive influence in the running of QPRC we can, and do, represent our areas and provide advice to council.

I don't have to get into what will be best for our region in this issue of BWD because I've made a commitment to not fall below the frequency of a quarterly so I'll wait until Summer.

I'll be assisted and reminded of this by Lyn Cram who has fortuitously come on board to sell advertisements. It's not something I excel at but of course it provides the revenue to make the whole venture affordable.

Eagle-eyed or picky readers might well notice that nepotism has crept into this issue. There are two articles by family members and too many written by me. It's always a bit of a lottery which stories materialise in time for publication but I can promise you this: if you submit a good story, I'll publish it.

I hope nobody finds the inclusion of the 'Householders Handbook' to be in poor taste. It is, after all, an official government publication but it comes from a time of different values. I also hope that it hasn't been removed to hang on a nail in the bunker; for then all the stuff I've written on page 18 will be sitting out there like a shag on a post-apocalypse rock.

What more can I say? Thanks for buying the magazine, or at least reading it. I hope you like what's here.

Paul Cockram

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PAUL AND HIS BEST FRIEND WHIP.

And the best of luck to you too

By Paul Dann, 28 July, 2016

Life may be little more than a way of filling in time between birth and death. But surely the happiness or sadness of life is so very dependent on luck or chance or whatever is the appropriate term for the concept.

I was conjecturing on this recently while lying back, as one does, in a cancer ward, and it came to me that I've been extraordinarily lucky in my life; and despite that trite old saying "You make your own luck", the luck of my life has had nothing to do with me ordering it. Nor has the bad luck, terrible luck of countless millions of lives has been little more than just that — bad luck. Bad luck to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, bad or good luck to not possess the ability to avoid (or accept) bad (or good) situations.

Anyhow, that's my simplistic view with which few will probably agree. But accepting the role of chance, what are some other factors that might, according to Paul Dann, be important in this life business?

When the final bell is about to gong, it seems appropriate to me to just accept what is to happen, rather than be frightened about it. However, to cover this simplistic approach there are some caveats.

There should be a minimum of pain. And the technology of healthcare seems to be heading well down this track and seems to be increasingly more compassionate, at least in a



STAYING PUT

wealthy country such as ours. Part of this is probably due to the caring and compassion and cheerfulness of the people involved in healthcare (don't talk to me about the exceptions, the people who don't fall into this; I know). And in this country, the contribution of a large proportion of African and Asians to our health system is surely a help — where would we be without them? In my opinion, roll on multiculturalism, and roll away the white supremacists. The question here of course is: shouldn't of these acquired skills of the guest healthcare force be put to helping the frighteningly deserving folk of the home countries of those who help us?

Why should terminal comfort be only the province of the rich?

The surroundings for the end of life experience should be comfortable at least. Terminal cancer in a remote African village would generally not be such a great experience.

The comfort of care should not be constrained by lack of money. Highly political, this, though it shouldn't be.

For many, one would think, end of life is made less depressing by the presence of good family and friends. Many long term relationships can really be cemented by the closeness and intimacy — physical and spiritual — of friends and family presence. Not for everyone, of course; some may prefer to face end of life alone.

And dogs and pets can well be part of the end-of-life support. For Mongarlowe's bitter winter nights the presence of a dog or two can be a bonus in terms of providing the input for a two-or-three dog night.

Belief systems may help. For some, or

GETTING OUT THERE

an increasing many, this does not have to be in the form of belief in an after-life or a higher being. For someone like myself, unable to accept such a concept, there are plenty of other beliefs; beliefs of the here and now, of the moment. A few: the first cry of a newborn; the gentle nudge of a favourite old dog lying on the lounge; the thrill of a lurking trout taking a carefully placed fly; the thrill of standing upright on a well-waxed board

careering down the wall of a wave; the spell of standing in contemplation in front of the Mona Lisa or the Taj Mahal. So it goes on, for me. Others have their own experiential beliefs — beliefs of the moment, not of antiquity. And finally, if all these, and other, caveats are in place, I can see no problem for the person who is at the end of life. Once dead, isn't that person — a person no longer — out of it, and no longer around to know what he or she

is missing? A different matter for the loved ones left behind, however. Surely grieving should be for the bereaved, rather than the dead. Perhaps accepting this might help the awful pain that grief can have for many. The knowledge that the dead was lucky enough to have had a good life, if that is the way to put it, might be some consolation.

And boy, have I been lucky enough to have had a great life.



TRAVEL LOGGED

Cecile Galiazzo

A decision earlier this year to have a "gap year" brought me, in my trusty Toyota HiAce to Mparntwe (Alice Springs), the third largest town in the Northern Territory. Population approx. 28,600 — 19% are Indigenous Australians.

Noteworthy stops included Creightons Creek, Point Lonsdale, Port Fairy, Meningie Lake, World of Music Festival Adelaide, Hawthornedean, Port Augusta and Coober Pedy.

Experiences to treasure — camping in the West MacDonnell Ranges and exploring the East Macs', working at Santa Teresa teaching Community Services and Aged Care, making paper at Curtin Springs, The Beanie Festival, bike ride to Simpsons Gap, watching the women make bush medicine, and as I write — teaching visual art at Ti Tree.

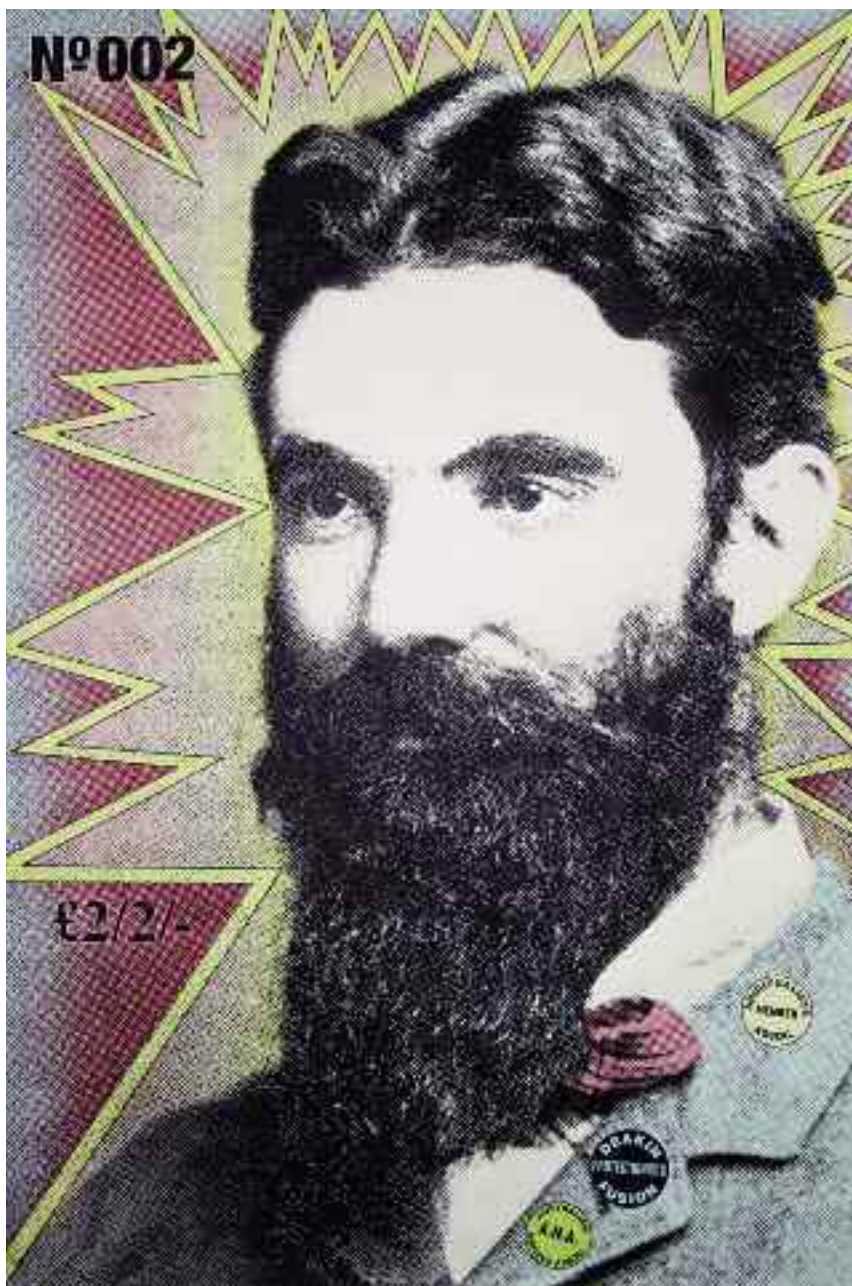
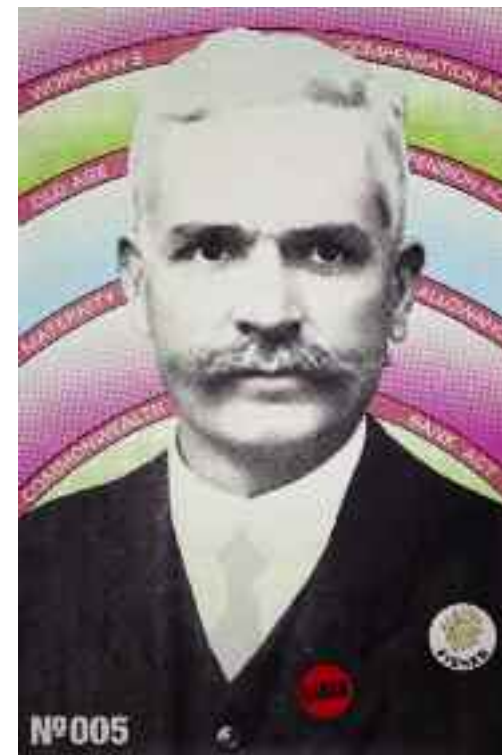
This has been a journey of many firsts and difference. Witness to a red, eternal, ancient landscape. The privilege of being with First Nations People, and sharing of knowledge. There is a sadness too, the evidence and scars of the trauma of colonisation, the inequity of resources — food and housing. Complex situations and decades of varying opinions as to how to 'fix it'.

There have been four deaths in my circle of family and friends since leaving Braidwood in February, a reminder of the gift of life and the love of a great community.

Things I've learnt — a new palette, to be grateful, people working remote in the territory have big hearts, how to be alone and at peace.

I do miss the Shoalhaven though and look forward to being back on the river by summer!

Save as Travel logged (Me and Alice), click send. Thanks Paul.



Who are these men?

A fellowship at the Australian Prime Ministers Centre in the Museum of Australian Democracy helped Alison Alder find out

The imprint of ink on paper in newspapers, journals, magazines, posters and ephemera was, until the introduction of Movietone newsreels in 1929, the primary source of visual information describing Australian Prime Ministers available to the Australian public. A fellowship at the Australian Prime Ministers Centre allowed me to investigate images and read descriptions of the first eight prime ministers: Barton, Deakin, Watson, Reid, Fisher, Cook, Hughes and Bruce with the aim of reinterpreting their images into a series of contemporary screen printed posters.

Some of the PMs I investigated had a great sense of their role in history and consequently left behind large photographic records, diaries, notes, books and other ephemera. Deakin is a case in point, his image and that of Hughes, are probably the best known faces of the first eight. On the other hand, Watson, for example, left behind scant visual records of his short time in office as PM and parliamentarian. I relied on written material to get a sense of his personality, like this description written by Billy Hughes:

The new Prime Minister (Watson) entered the room ... he was worth going miles to see. He had dressed for the part; his Vandyke beard was exquisitely groomed, his abundant brown hair

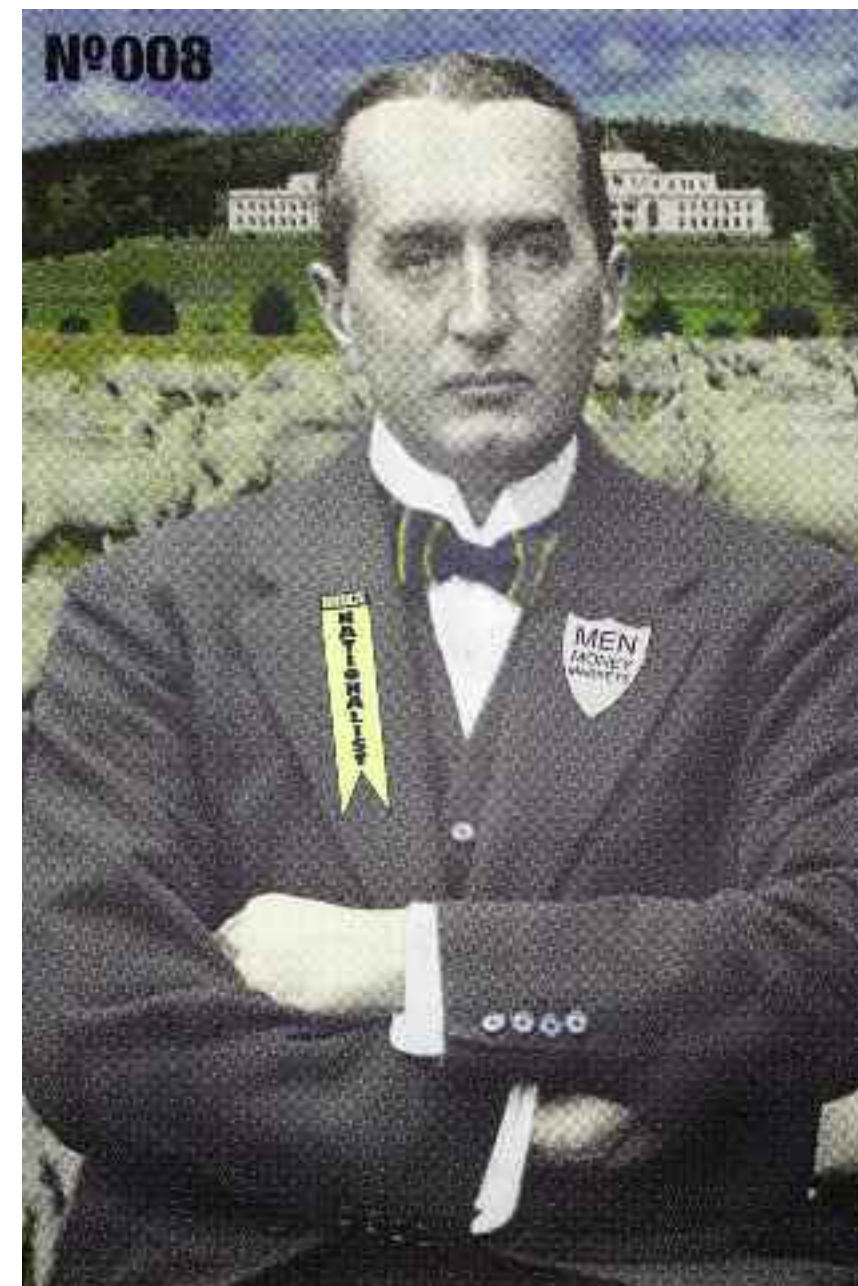
smoothly brushed ... he was a perfect picture of a statesman, the leader.

Other prime ministers were known to the public by their caricatures. Reid, for example was lampooned for the size of his girth, his walrus moustache and habit of wearing a monocle. He rejected his first official portrait, painted by George Lambert, as being a caricature. Hughes, known as 'The Little Digger' had a huge number of images and cartoons drawn of him which showed the divisiveness and showbiz nature of his tenure as PM, and as the longest serving Australian parliamentarian.

In these portraits I refer to some of the PMs legislative legacies but I also wanted to capture some aspect of their personalities. Bruce, for example would not now be described as a 'retail' politician as he was much more comfortable in the boardroom rather than the chamber. He was the first prime minister to sit in the provisional parliament house, the first to form a coalition with the country party, and the first to lose his seat whilst PM (a claim to fame that he shares with John Howard).

Deakin on the other hand was a retail politician with a messianic view of himself. I placed Deakin in front of a starburst image sourced from the cover of a composition commissioned by the Australian Natives Association, champions of the White Australia Policy.

The eight portraits will be exhibited at the Australian Museum of Democracy in 2017 as part of the 90th birthday celebrations of Old Parliament House. Sadly the Australian Prime Ministers Centre no longer offers fellowships and the wonderful library has been packed up and stored in boxes. The Museum, like some other national cultural institutions, suffered funding cuts this year with the result that the opportunity to uncover our cultural heritage will be limited until future legislators see the benefit of Australians understanding and accessing our rich, and sadly often unknown, history.





A Japanese story

Itahashi Misao on why she started working as a woofers, the good, the bad and why she'd recommend it

Call me Misa, I'm 28 years old and born in Japan. My experience of Australia when I visited as an exchange student at the age of 14, of a laid-back but very enjoyable lifestyle, was something I never forgot, and when I was twice that age I came back to Australia again on a working holiday.

The reason I first took up woofing was, to put it bluntly, because I wanted to try my hand at shearing sheep. I'd somehow scraped through a university course on agriculture, and it's certainly true that I was attracted by the sound of such things as permaculture and organic farming, but first and foremost I looked for a woofing job based on a pretty airheaded desire to experience 'real Australian agriculture'. Behind

this idea, I think, lay among other things a memory of the yearning I felt when as a child I watched on TV the anime movie Heidi, the Little Girl of the Alps. I wanted to run forever over the boundless plains with sheep and goats and sheepdogs.

To become a woofers, you first have to pay \$50 to the Woofers Association. When you've done that, you get sent a booklet (or sometimes download PDF data) containing a list of farms registered with the Woofers Association. You search there for a farm you'd like to go to, make direct contact via phone or email with the farm's owner, and in that way decide your destination.

Instead of receiving pay, you're provided with food and somewhere to live. Essentially, the idea is that you

experience life in some leisurely country town area.

Before I started work as a woofers, I worked for six months on a pawpaw farm near the little town of Mareeba near Cairns, mostly doing packing. This was in order to get a second year of working holiday visa. The rule is that in order to apply for this visa you have to work more than 88 days on a farm. I received really good money on this farm, and all my workmates were great people. However, there were production quotas set for packers, and if the supervisor judged that you weren't packing fast enough you could suddenly get fired. In fact, very soon after I started work our packing shed was set a kind of competition to see who'd get fired.

I'm small, and not good with my hands, and besides I wasn't yet used to the work, so I was at a real disadvantage, but with the help of my companions I somehow made it through and survived the crisis. This competition lasted about a week, and while it was on the atmosphere in the shed was deadly — no one talked much and everyone was really stressed out and on tenterhooks.

IS WOOFING A DOG'S LIFE?

In the end, one girl and one boy from the shed lost their jobs, as well as another girl's boyfriend who worked in a different work team. I remember vividly how sad it made me to see her spitting out the words "I hate Australia!"

Some friends who were working on nearby farms also got the sack and lost their jobs without warning. It wasn't that they weren't serious workers, or were lacking in skill or effort, it's just that from time to time people on working holiday visas are sacked on the spot, at the whim of the owner, if the owner decides that the harvest hasn't gone as well as expected and he needs to reduce staff.

Everyone was working flat out for the sake of getting their visa and making a bit of money to live on.

I was lucky enough to have work, but whenever I heard these stories it gave me a real jolt, and I worried that I too might suddenly lose my job.



Actually, until August 2015 it was possible to get a 2-year working holiday visa even if you worked as a woofers (i.e. without pay). But in September the law changed, and you were obliged to produce a salary payment statement for the period as

evidence that you'd worked for 88 days on a farm. In other words, the only work that was now recognised was paid farm work. This caused everyone who wanted the working holiday visa to pour into this work in a mad rush. It seems to me that

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because there is now this huge supply of workers, the farm owners get to simply hire and fire as they please. The background to this change in working holiday visas is that there had apparently been some dodgy employers and middle men who had forced the workers to work for unfairly low wages. But I think it's a real shame that woofers can no longer get the two-year visa as a result.

The reason why I'm really glad I began to work as a woofers is that I can relax and not have to worry about work quotas or whether I might get fired at the drop of a hat. I can't earn a wage, but on the other hand I can eat lots of fresh vegetables and delicious food, and I have a bed I can sleep in peacefully. The farm owners who take on woofers have to fulfill certain requirements to be able to join the organisation, and take out insurance, so we can place quite a lot of trust in both the woofers system and the people we stay with.

In fact, both the farm owners and the people in the town are really kind, and unlike busy city life, you get the opportunity to take part in the kind of real Australian situations and events typical of the local area. Also, it depends on the size of the farm, but if you choose a place that doesn't take in many woofers you get the chance to

speaking lots of English with the owners, their families and their friends. In my own case, in the big city where lots of other Asians gather looking for work I find I tend to let myself speak my native language, so I feel this is a great opportunity to make a break from that kind of environment.

I'd certainly recommend people who come to Australia on a working holiday visas try woofing.

What I'd really love to see is the return of the old two-year visa system. People who want to earn money by slaving hard on a farm can go to some farm that will pay them a wage, while those who want to enjoy Australia's natural environment and farming life in a more leisurely way can take up woofing. After all, people have different characters and want to do different things, so there should be a bit of leeway in the choices of work available for obtaining a visa it seems to me.

Mind you, it's bad for the heart to have your precious savings steadily being whittled away on transport and social expenses. This is why, after about a month of working as a woofers, I'm



planning to go to the city and return to paid work for a while. But if I've managed to make enough money to travel round Australia at the end of my stay here, and have some time off with a friend who plans to visit from Japan, I hope to look for work as a woofers again. I haven't managed to get an opportunity to shear a sheep this time round, but I'm trusting that next spring or autumn there I'll be as a woofers, fulfilling my dream and shearing a sheep at last.

Tom's leg

Tom Richardson hops on the band wagon to tell us his story

In 1976, when I first contracted cancer and was operated on they basically gave me a year to live. But after serious investigations each quarter by my surgeon, he decided after 12 months that in fact I was probably going to survive and it probably wasn't going to come back. It was deemed that I had gotten past it.

That was fine until ten years later in 1986, when the same cancer reappeared in the same spot in my right thigh and I had to undergo another eight-hour round at the butcher's table. After this second surgical removal I then underwent radiation oncology at Woden Valley Hospital (now Canberra Hospital). I was given radiation treatment every day for twelve weeks.

That was deemed to be very successful except that in 1986 when they gave you radiation treatment it wasn't like it is today. It was not targeted with anywhere near as much finesse and the capacity of the technology was nowhere near what it is today. As a result of that, about four years after that, I ended up with what's called lymphoedema (which is basically elephantiasis). That was my right leg, in 1990 — and I lived with that right through until February 2007.

It was painful to move my knee joints and it was painful to walk in a lot of ways, and it meant that I had difficulty driving. I had to have my trousers specially made with my right leg twice the size of my left, so the jeans and my trousers were designed to fit the fact that my right leg was huge. And all my trousers had zips on the right side so I could get them on and off. It was something I got used to but the discomfort was huge.

In February 2007 I lost all circulation to my toes and they started to go gangrenous, and my leg was amputated. I had known for some years that it was going to come off. I didn't know



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when and I didn't know under what circumstances. However, it wasn't as if I wasn't geared for it, it wasn't as if I hadn't tried to maintain the treatment to get my leg under control, for as many years as I could. Thank God for private health insurance, that's all I can say.

When it came off I then had to deal with the issue of the type of prosthetic leg, what I was going to wear and who was going to provide it. The government prosthetic legs we had back then were basically one where straps went over your knee. It wasn't long after that I decided I wasn't going to live with the 'reject technology' as I call it, and again, because of the fact that we had private health insurance I decided I would buy a high-tech leg.

That's what I did. Some of them were good, but never really good. As an amputee you suffer from skin issues which are always there. You can never get away from them. They are with you till the day you die. You are a work in progress as an amputee, and you have to be aware of the fact that these things do happen to you, and that, if you do happen to have some of the downsides, well you either live with it or you get it fixed.

The current prosthetic limb that I am wearing is a thing called a 'unity system' from a company called Össur and this time round I am waiting for something to go wrong — because nothing has gone wrong. It is really working wonderfully.

The 'unity system' has a vacuum pump under the ball of the foot and it works very very well. I suppose, the other thing is that I have settled down a little bit and I don't give it as much of heavy work as what I would have five or six years ago. I take things a little more easily and am much more calm in what I do.

I am not going to climb any more mountains and I am not



BEFORE AND AFTER.



going to do the things the same way as I did them five or six years ago. So from that point of view it is probably a combination of a very good system and a bit more realism from my point of view.

It is worth mentioning that from 1992 through to 2007, I spent those years on the NSW executive committee for the NSW Lymphoedema Association, which is mainly for ladies who have breast cancer.

When I lost my leg I couldn't belong to that association because I didn't have lymphoedema any more as I didn't have my leg. So I joined the NSW Amputee Executive Association, and I now work as a mentor, as a hospital visitation mentor for people who are about to lose their legs or leg or limb, or have just lost a limb.

I get requests from the vascular surgeon who operated on me to go and visit people. He then rings the person and says, "look I know somebody and if you would like to have some mentoring or some advice you can ring Tom". If they ring me then I go and visit them anywhere in the south-eastern part of NSW. I talk to them about their leg, what they can get, who they can see, what the options are, what they could look forward to, how they can deal with it, how they can get their headspace together. As often as not you are better off without the gammy leg that you have got, and if it has to come off, to reassure people that technology today is so far advanced to what it was 15 years ago. It is just chalk and cheese.

I believe if you can get people's headspace a little bit more clear in the line of what they can do instead of just sitting there on the bed, then it's all good.

You are never going to solve the problems but you can allay a lot of their fears, let them realise that you are an amputee, that you live with it and talk to them about the issues and where they can go and what sort of legs they can do either on private health, what the government will pay for, what options they have. Most of the questions I can answer before they even start to think about them, [namely] where to go when. So that's what I do, and I feel it's just a little thing, it's nothing much. I just do it.



What is it about a bush track?

Sue Doran walks us through



WALKERS RESTING ON PEBBLY SHORE OF BUCKENBOWRA.

Sometimes it seems that a lifetime of bushwalking only amplifies the urge to get back on the track. Starting out along a new trail endorphins step up their dervish dance at the first hint of birdsong and breeze, the subtle play of light, and the sweet aroma of life's renewal happening at your feet. Forest dimensions feed the mood, recalibrating our perception of our place in this world. It's easy to become addicted.

In our local area I'm exploring new ground while my companion leads along familiar trails. Such an abundance of options: the Budawangs, the Deua, the Monga and the Morton. Now's the perfect time of year.

Here are three tasters — walks I've done recently for the first time. Many locals would know these like an old friend. But for those who don't regularly walk, maybe you'd consider trying one that suits your interest/fitness level during the Spring?

Mt Budawang (Budawang NP)

On the way up, my companion recognised a flash of life darting across the path ahead as a spotted-tailed quoll — the animal itself clinging to the hope that speed would blur the evidence. Trudging ever upwards on this wide firetrail with its easy and consistent gradient, the pace allowed time to also notice the miniscule; universes of multicoloured lichen and fungi. Tiny red trumpets of the native fuschia (*Epacris*) were bursting to show off too. Then once the Silvertop Ash forests gave way to lower wind-bitten heath (Red Fruit Saw Edge) and Herringbone fern the northern expanse of blue on bluer on bluest of the Morton appeared — the nipple known as Pigeon House, the iconic Castle and Currockbilly Mountain — laid out in their perpetual majesty. From the summit, through the Ti-Tree, we could glimpse the Mongarlowe

Valley meandering below and, further to the west, Gillamatong, with Braidwood nestled cosily beneath. To the south, the Clyde Mountain, and looking to the east, Batemans Bay basked in tranquility on a clear eucalyptus-blue-infused day. The best views are from the Fire Tower of course. A lyrebird held us in its thrall as we dropped back amongst the *Dicksonia* treeferns on our descent. No stage diva comes near its repertoire. It stopped us in our tracks, searching the bush for movement, then we crept along following the sound, totally tuned to its exquisite playlist of decoys. Too many superlatives? Try it and see.

A half-day stroll up to the summit (1138m altitude) and back to the car — including time to stop for lunch and to admire views — in total 7 km. The turn off to the entrance is just four kilometres from Mongarlowe along Budawang Rd. Look for the bushwalker icon on a post on your left. The



THE NIPPLE KNOWN AS PIGEON HOUSE

road to the start has a few deep pools after rain. You'll know you're on the right track when you come across the first Holden holding up a tree, then it will be confirmed when you spy No. 2 in a paddock, preferring to grow a tree in retirement than to shoot a 'roo. The ultimate will be when you see the Volvo. See what I mean about recalibration? Take your two litres of water and a picnic lunch to have at the top. A biting breeze up there calls for a jacket. With Spring buds bursting, a perfect time for this one.

Dasyurus Track (Monga NP)

Named for the spotted-tailed quoll, just last week we took this 8 km gentle stroll that begins at the shaded Dasyurus Picnic Area (where there is a loo!) by the Mongarlowe River and

meets the main Corn Trail track after 4 km. Start by fording the shallow Mongarlowe. A few options here: Bare feet? Just take a towel. Shoes on and use of walking poles to steady the careful selection of stepping stones? Take walking poles. Wear creek-crossers (gumboots/Crocks?) change into your hiking boots on the other side? Collect your creek-crossers from the bush on the way back.

Pretty views of the Mongarlowe River start the walk and along its banks you can see concrete evidence (literally) of a 1930s plan, so oral history tells it, to redirect the northward flowing Mongarlowe over the eastern escarpment to water the coast. Such folly this scheme seems from today's perspective; though those were times when policy making was concerned with poverty relief above all else. It's unbearable to imagine the likely

impact of this strategy on the Monga forest habitats.

The walk follows a ridge east. Exposed to a westerly breeze banksias were flowering amongst the dry forest. Over the ridge the creeks flowed in a different direction. A watershed. These waters would collect in the Buckenbowra River that heads south-east to the coast, a more moist environment where tall Viminalis eucalypts, draped in their bark ribbons, tower over the track made narrow by lush borders of Coral fern and shaded above by Gondwanan Dicksonia tree ferns. Was it actually the case that these forests lost their koalas to a bounty a century or so ago?

A return trip, access is via River Forest Road (all weather road) about 20 kilometres along the Kings Highway east of Braidwood. Only a half day out. With a picnic table back at Dasyurus,



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it's a great spot to lunch and boil the billy. You may need a jacket for the picnic area but a T-shirt will do for the rest.

The Corn Trail (Monga NP)

Back in Autumn a whole mob of us, led by my walking companion, descended the Corn Trail; enough people to cover the cost of bus hire to collect us at the other end. A smaller group could start at Dasyurus if you wished (see above) after leaving a car at the end of Misty Mountain Road (off the Kings Highway below the bends), a forty minute trip from the Highway. You'll be so glad you did.

The Corn Trail is rich in history. Looking back to our Indigenous heritage it was a highway for gatherings between salt water and fresh water people including Yuin and Walbunja language groups among others for many thousands of years. Post-colonisation, it was used as a horse and donkey-laden freight highway often operated by farming women, delivering produce from the coast to the highlands. Our own Jack Featherstone portrays these images evocatively in his artworks. From Dasyurus it's a 16 kilometre walk — downhill — a workout for muscles you never knew you had.

From dry forest crunching underfoot between Grass Trees, the descent is steady as the soil moistens and softens. An easy crossing of the Buckenbowra River and eventually you reach deliciously deep green shaded glens of ancient



rainforest. Twisted vines and giant Dicksonia Treeferns, Bird's Nest ferns, Cabbage Tree Palms, mossy logs and lichen — a dripping, cool, life-generating silent world begging meditation, leaves you with the sense that you've touched an ancient, solemn, sacred place. It is here, in the Misty Mountains that the escarpment clouds perennially drip to become the pristine waters we know as Mongarlowe and Buckenbowra, sustaining platypus, quoll and vibrant birdlife.

Finally after four hours or so you come to rest, again beside the shaded Buckenbowra, this time on its pebbly shore. Welcome respite after a wonderful day-long hike.

You might want to get into your stride on one of these tracks before things start to warm up. Ron Doughton's book *Bushwalking in the Budawangs* is a helpful guide for the Monga as well, as are the Corn Trail Historical Society and the Monga NP pamphlets (NPWS) available from the Visitor Information Centre at the National Theatre in Braidwood.

Possibilities for getting out on the track are endless around here. How lucky we are that we can reap the benefits of thousands of years of Indigenous stewardship of this land and, more recently, the outcome of hard-fought battles to save these forests in perpetuity.

Beware, once you start on this bushwalking journey, the bush track will come back to find you.

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Yately House

Sonja Charles takes us through the history
and how she came to belong to it

When I decided at the beginning of 2014 that I wanted to do something completely 'out there', my two main options were to rent out my house and travel around Australia, or to buy a property where people would love to stay and have wonderful experiences. And here I am at Yately House in Braidwood. Sonja Charles — pleased to meet you. I think I have had as many jobs as Yately House has had owners. In fact I've had more. I have been a cleaner, a waitress, a gardener, an After School Care Co-ordinator and a Real Estate agent.

I have a degree in Psychology from ANU and studied post grad counselling at the University of Canberra. I am a qualified horse riding instructor, and Australia's youngest ever Advanced Dive Master. The most wonderful job I have had was working with teenagers in residential care. I then moved into aged care, and just before coming to Yately I looked after

a quadriplegic man who taught me all about caring for someone who depends on you for [almost] everything.

Having been single all my life, and finding myself between jobs, I was checking out singles sights one night, when I found an interesting enough profile of a fellow who said he was from Yass Valley. I wondered if that was the same as Yass, and being an ex-Real Estate agent, I went straight to the internet on the 'allhomes' page.

That was the end of my interest in the singles sites!

Within three months I had driven all over the region between Sydney, Canberra and Tross Heads. I had missed a few stunning places in Goulburn, and kept re-visiting a listing in Braidwood that didn't really grab me at first, but looked interesting.

So in November of that year I drove out to Braidwood to a long circular driveway under some of the biggest trees I had ever seen in a garden. I had

no idea what to expect, and played chases with the agent until we ended up on the same part of the enormous, wrap-around veranda.

When I walked in the front door the scale of the house became instantly apparent, and I was shown around in a mild haze of awe. High ceilings, stunning windows and huge rooms with fireplaces. It is an unexpected experience if you have only seen the house from outside. But there was something else here too. From the moment I entered, the house started to get inside my veins.

There is a peace inside
Yately House. When you
walk around in silence,
you are somehow
given back to your
own awareness.

I suppose it is very like mindfulness. The house intrigued me, and despite some minor drawbacks to it being a B&B, I started the process of trying to purchase it.

Sincere gratitude from myself, and I am sure the owners at the time, must go to Denver Shoemark, the local agent who had recently taken over the listing and made the process unbelievably simple.

In April of 2015 I became the current owner of this gorgeous Victorian home. I still can't believe it! I have had one bathroom renovated and have started the Sydney Harbour Bridge-esque task of painting whatever needs doing next.

Everyone in the region knows what a state the house and gardens were in when it was purchased by Peter and Pauline Duggan. Having seen and loved the house since 1968, they were finally able to purchase it on December 21st, 1991. I find it more than interesting that I was born on December 21st, 1968!

The Duggans did an incredible job, not only restoring the house, but re-establishing the garden. Some 25 years later, there are some things that need thinning out or removing. However I am so grateful that I have a garden that complements the house so very well, and is full of plants that are robust in the extremes of the local environment. I am having a lot of fun continuing the work Peter and Pauline started.

My most recent investment in the house was to have it insulated. A

range of expletives could not describe my horror at how cold the house was during the winter of 2015. This winter was a lot milder. However, guests still found it frightening cold. Since the insulation has gone in — well — let's just say I am glad I spent the money (which was much less than I expected).

I have found great friends in Karen and Frank Hansby, Karen being the daughter of the Duggans. They really noticed the difference temperature wise in the house and have been a wealth of valuable information I could not have got elsewhere. Thanks guys!

The next months will see some more revamping of the garden, including a new fence of some sort. Hopefully it won't send me to the wall, as it did the original builder of the house, George Tweedie. By 1883, Mr Tweedie could not afford the investment he had made in the house, and was heavily in debt to Christopher Newton. Tweedie was ordered 'to cover building, fences etc. to the sum of two and half thousand pounds'. In 1883! My wonderful neighbour Chris Nelson recently alerted me to a photo in Jill Clarke's new facebook page 'Braidwood Businesses: A History'. The photo shows Yately House with an extensive fence all the way around it. It would have cost a fortune on top of what the house cost Tweedie, and I may have even found some of those fence palings behind some structures in the garden!

Yately has hosted some fantastic events and guests in the last 18 months. We had a wonderful dinner for the Bendigo Bank, and an amazing performance by 'Beautifully Mad' back in June. This world class duo are due to perform here again on the 1st of



REGGIE HOPPED INTO THE PICTURE
WITH SONJA BUT DANIEL MISSED OUT.



October, supported by local girls 'Rubydears', who are developing the most wonderful harmonies in their repertoire of folk and gypsy style

music. I am so happy to be able to do this sort of thing in a town like Braidwood.

I would love for anyone in the town who knows something about Yately that I may not to get in contact with me. The number here at the house is 4842 1766. It would be much appreciated.

I would like to say a big thank you to all those who have been so helpful to me since I came to Braidwood. Shoemarks, Nelsons, Linda Gannon, and all the crew at the radio station and the men's shed. You and many others are having a hugely positive impact on my life.

Viva La Braidwood!



Be very, very unafraid

Paul Cockram wants to get the bunk out of bunker

So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is ... fear itself — nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.”

Franklin Delano Roosevelt said this when he took the Oath of Office as President of the United States. It is as true today as it was in 1933. So why are our leaders now the ones who are encouraging us to be afraid.

My grandfather lived in fearful times and by the time he returned to Australia from the battlefield in France twenty million people had died. Twenty-five years later my father too went off to Europe and fought in another terrible war that killed more than fifty-seven million people in six years.

At the end of the Second World War humanity entered the nuclear age and there was a very real fear that all life could be blown off the face of the planet if there was a Third World War.

The official fear of nuclear attack persisted through to the 1970s.

Included in this issue of *BWD* is a reprint of a Civil Defence booklet with the ever-so-droll title: *'Householders' Handbook for Nuclear Warfare'*. I got hold of a handful of copies from a Dad's Army-type office in Sydney in 1976.

I don't think they were ever distributed to the general population with any degree of enthusiasm. The whole scenario as described in the booklet raises far too many questions for a government to satisfactorily answer.

As you can see (unless someone has

ripped it out) on the cover of the booklet the 'householders' are looking cheerful even as they go about stocking their under table or closet bomb shelter with fourteen days' worth of supplies.

It is hard to reconcile this 'down-home' approach to civic safety with the likely scenario that, should these conditions have come to pass, an area the size of Sydney would have been flattened — instantly vapourised.

A torch, a radio and a sanitation bucket will do you no good at ground zero.

Younger readers may not know the fear of nuclear annihilation. It doesn't make the news any more after the British stopped nuking Central Australia, the French tired of blowing up islands in the Pacific Ocean and the Russians and Americans stopped blowing up bits of the sky, the sea and the land.

For a while there, old battleships and fake towns were being destroyed by all sorts of bombs that could be 'delivered' by Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles — atom bombs, hydrogen bombs and even neutron bombs.

I remember the sales brochure selling the merits of a neutron bomb. It gave off only a small bang but accompanied by an intense dose of radiation. The claim was that it would kill a tank's crew but leave the machine unscathed. Research, I'm pretty sure, was discontinued when it was realised that neutron bombs transgressed one of the basic tenets of modern warfare — the mass destruction of expensive stuff.

Anyway, after a while even the most recalcitrant warmongers could see that in a world capable of MAD, Mutually Assured Destruction, nuclear weapons are actually useless.

I'm not wanting to make you scared — quite the opposite. The point I'm trying to make is that we're coming from a time where the risks and the casualty count were far greater than they are now.

Why should we be afraid in Australia

in 2016? Of what should we be afraid? We are not going to be invaded by foreign soldiers whose military authority will then trump our legal protections and rights.

It's unlikely that conscription will be reintroduced to force our young people to fight in foreign wars. The threat of nuclear annihilation has ebbed and as stated earlier, there's little can be done about that anyway.

Let's cut to the chase and mention the big 'T' word. Terrorism is the new cold war; it's that ever-present threat to which there is no defence.

There is a real danger that disaffected or religiously indoctrinated persons will commit random acts of violence somewhere, someday in our peaceful suburbs. It will be tragic for the victims and confronting for the rest of us. The media will err, as usual, on the side of sensationalism and nationalistic tub thumping.

The real danger in state-sponsored fear lies in the level of deliberate deception and distraction. What would we be thinking about if not preoccupied by terrorism?

Climate change and environmental destruction are issues that struggle to make headlines as seductive as a story about a wayward nong with a knife, a gun or a bomb. The lone wolf or the small activist cell is given the status and fear factor of a worldwide movement out to kill us all.

Ironically, if there is a well-organised clandestine group out to destroy the world it surely is the fossil-fuel lobby. Global warming from continuing the burning of coal is causing planetary grief more in keeping with the MAD nuclear doctrine.

To be afraid of the atmosphere warming to a 'tipping point' from where recovery will be difficult is a perfectly reasonable fear. Unlike random terrorism and thermo-nuclear armageddon it is, fortunately, something we can work to prevent.

It's time for the government to produce a new civic defence booklet. It could be called, *'A Householders' Guide to Global Warming'*.

Fear is a survival instinct. Rational fear is the bit that's left after what can't be helped is ignored. If we use our fear wisely we will survive.

Poke it 'til it punches

OR

Yo man, read my article

Leo Alder promises it'll probably be useful, so like, check it out.

So, you've finished school and you're heading for the big city, or to Canberra, in which case you're headed for the weird, medium city. I've been there, I've done that — almost every young person who has ever lived in Braidwood has. What this means, my young friend, is that I have some sweet survival tips for you, cultivated through the pure desperation of the poor life in the big city. So gather round, and let me impart some of the hard-earned wisdom I've gained.

The first order of business is this — wisdom may be too strong a word for what I'm about to impart. I wouldn't go quite so far as to call the following 'hacks' either, but when you've injected all of your money into an unforgiving alcohol economy, or been foolish enough to buy a textbook rather than rip it from the internet (if the internet fails you, I recommend laboriously taking a photo of every single page of a richer or dumber friend's textbook), then maybe my tips will let you scrape together the shrapnel for another drink, or that all important pack of Mi goreng.

Speaking of Mi goreng — get used to it. For the uninitiated, it's a cheap instant noodle bought in packs of five if you're hitting up the classic Indo Mie variant, and you should be, because it's ubiquitous and has the best flavour to price ratio.

The Cult of the Goreng takes in all newcomers. In my first year out of home, had you cut me, I probably would have bled Mi goreng I ate it so much. It was the foundation of my diet, and, as far as I was concerned, endlessly flexible. Mi goreng omelette, Mi goreng burrito. One all-nighter before an imminently due assignment I added a huge amount of instant coffee to my bowl to create what can

only be described as a Mi goreng death sludge, effective — but not recommended.

The Young Ones had their lentils — my generation has our Mi goreng. Though nowadays I can't think of it without feeling sick.

An important factor of your survival is designing your eating habits, and indeed, straight up organising your life around whatever is on special. Mi Goreng is so ridiculously cheap, it may as well always be on special, but there are a lot of other opportunities outside of the humble instant noodle, so always keep an eye out.

There are, however, some specials I would warn against. Chicken hearts — two bucks for half a kilo! But don't be tempted. There's a reason they are so cheap, and it's a good one. Also, paper towels, no matter how cheap, are not a substitute for toilet paper. My roommate and I once bought heavily discounted hand-towels, sawed them in half into the standard toilet paper size and then quickly realised it did not make for a good time. The pain is not worth the spare change.

Speaking of spare change, apart from periodically checking under your friends' couch cushions and quietly pocketing your ill-gotten gains, there is a bunch of other ways to make a bit of extra silver.

If you're low on phone credit, find a pay phone, drop 20 cents in there, call the number you need, and then make sure you can summarise your message into a single word, because you have an opportunity to get just one out before the pay phone remembers that the standard call price is 50 cents and hangs you up, foolishly giving you your 20 back if you hit the coin return fast enough. My friends were so used to me employing this method, that every time they'd pick up their phone to receive a garbled half-scream, they'd just know to call me.

And hang onto your loose change, because there's money to be made with it. I mean, not much, but money is money. Basically, find a vending machine, preferably one away from the judgmental eyes of passers-by, feed a few coins into the coin slot, then, smack that coin return and hope for the best. Very, very occasionally it'll mess up and give you an extra coin. Granted, very occasionally it'll





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LEO'S TIPS N TRICKS

also rip you off a coin, so it's essentially gambling for the very poor. Keep at it until you come out on top, but also know when to quit, I've lost big before (50 cents). With practice you'll work out which machines have the best odds. If you're like me and too poor for a car, you're going to be doing a lot of bussing. Bussing isn't particularly convenient, but it does churn out a lot of great stories to tell your friends, so you get your money's worth in the pure entertainment value of rubbing shoulders with some of the city's finest.

Now, I've come up with a few bus scams in my time, but none are as grand as the 'Siamese Twins Scam'. This basically entails buying an extra, extra large shirt with a good friend you don't mind getting up close and personal with, and wearing it together, to create the illusion that the two of you are in fact, Siamese twins. I find it helps if you write a Siamese twin related slogan on the front of the shirt, such as 'Siamese Twins 4 Life'. This can help mitigate the mistrust associated with Siamese twins who look nothing alike. The next step is to board a bus and attempt to convince the bus driver that the two of you are, in fact, Siamese twins and thus represent one person who obviously requires but a single fare. The bus driver, now faced with one of the greatest dilemmas of our time, must make a snap decision. What will their answer be? I recommend attempting the scheme and finding out.

If the scheme fails (not saying that it's going to), then you're going to be walking. This isn't necessarily a bad thing. In my opinion, the best way to stay fit is to be a scrooge. I once did so much walking (mostly because I kept missing the bus) that I busted my shoes beyond repair. This in, and of itself, was an opportunity as I walked barefoot into the shoe store and attempted to convince the shoe saleswoman that I'd never worn a pair of shoes in my life, and that as this was to be my maiden pair, I should be entitled to a sweet discount. Sort of like a first-home buyer rebate. However, while she foolishly believed me, she was unwilling to facilitate a discount on this momentous occasion, and I left paying full price. But such is life. Don't let failure get you down.

Another hot tip — if you're leaving home to go to university, join a club, I mean, it's a good way to make friends (more couches = more coins), but more importantly, most clubs have regular booze ups (at least at my uni) which you can go along to in order to exploit the very real possibility of a bar tab.

Unfortunately, universities are wise to the ways of the youth, and most won't allow a club to spend its budget exclusively on alcohol. To counteract this, my university club once planned to enact a long, convoluted money laundering scheme, which involved washing the university funding money through a series of cash-in-hand events, in which we'd spend the 'dirty' funding money on the set-up, and receive 'clean' physical money for our efforts from those that attended. Sadly, we weren't the accounting club, so it didn't pan out, but as I said before, don't let failure get you down. In fact, get used to it.

The way I see it, a hilariously failed scheme is just as an amusing story to tell as a successful one. Leaving home is a great opportunity to enter out into the world and see what you can get from it. Poke it till it punches. Test its limits. And one day catalogue some of your own schemes for the benefit of those coming after you (I mean school leavers, not angry, scammed suckers coming after you for blood).

But I appreciate you listening gentle reader, and as thanks I'll leave you with the most important tip of all — don't forget to keep the best scams to yourself.

Peace.



STEVE MAHER LEADS THE BAND AT FRIDAY PRACTICE.

Steve Maher started the Braidwood Central School Concert Band In-School program in term one this year

This is how he sees it ...

I think the BCS Concert Band program is a great avenue for students to experience the benefits of learning to play an instrument. I believe everybody should learn to make music.

Not many L-platers will drive in the Bathurst 1000, yet most will drive a car, similarly learning to create music doesn't need to lead to a professional music career to be an important skill for life.

The band program demonstrates the tenets of an agile progressive learning methodology. It's been developed over a number of years and allows for greater personalisation for each participant and repertoire selection. This fosters active participation in sessions for both large and small ensembles.

A regular schedule of public performances encourages preparation and

organisation. It organically introduces students to the demands of professional practice from day one, in a fun and supportive way devoid of strict or repetitious practice regimes. This is important if musical understanding is to inform and nurture other areas of learning, particularly STEM subjects, or aid in the development of critical thinking, problem solving, or spatial awareness.

About Steve Maher:

Steve has been making and learning music since 1980 and performing professionally since 1989. He has been developing personalised learning programs since 2005, delivering progressive education music programs in-school since 2009 and has just released his debut album 'Moments and Lifetimes' available on iTunes and Spotify. Steve works for Riffs and Rants and, until recently, the Goulburn Regional Conservatorium.



Amanda Wray from BCS explains how it all started

It was after Mary Appleby was successful in obtaining a grant that the school was able to purchase a set of concert band instruments. We hire them out to the students who are interested in being in the band.

We canvassed the kids and we ended up going from Year 3 right through to high school. They came in, tried out an instrument and decided what suited them.

One boy picked up a trumpet and he just

loved it — that was the instrument for him. One of the girls started on the clarinet but she didn't like the feel of the vibrating reed so she switched to the trombone and it suits her really well.

Some students tried a few different instruments before they settled. We've still got some unused ones in the cupboard so more players would be good.

The first time we played was at the recent 'Celebrate Central' and we're hoping to play an overture in the upcoming school play.

We take on new players each year so if students or parents are interested they just need to come and see me.



(ABOVE) DAKOTA BUNN WITH HER TROMBONE AND (BELOW) OUR COVER BOYS, TULLY WILD RIVER AND NELSON SARGENT.





David McClymont

explains how to become a keyboard warrior

Way back in primary school, a fellow student used to boast about the fact that he played the piano. He was such a boastful sort of fellow that I thought, I am not going to cop that. I am going to learn the piano and I am going to be better than you.

But after a while I started to realise that I quite liked it, so I started classical piano first when I was eight. My first teacher was a local lady from West Wollongong and I can thank her for teaching me how to read music. When you start out you really do need to learn classical. If you are going to do it properly you need to learn the basics of fingering and of classical technique.

My next teacher had short stubby little fingers but he could move them. I used to watch him and think, this is just astonishing, look what he can do. Then one time he played me an album

of Fats Waller and I remember saying to him: That's it, that's what I want to do. Show me how to do that.

When I was in my earlie twenties I went to the Wollongong Conservatorium, and I started playing with Don Harper who was a jazz violinist who had been everywhere and done everything. I played with the big band at Wollongong Conservatorium until I went to England.

I went to England in 1988, and while I was with the big band you had to read the charts, so again reading [music] was important. If you want to be a full time musician you have got to read. Over that time I played in a lot of rock bands; I paid my way through university by playing in a band. Pubs, clubs, weddings, parties, anything.

In the pubs we just played pop rock, whatever was on the radio. We just learned it and played it. I had an electric piano like Roger Hodgson from

IN THE KEY OF D

Supertramp who used a Wurlitzer so I used one of those. It never really cut through, I could hardly ever hear myself. The guitarist and the band were so loud.

The drummer, he'd had an accident at some stage and he couldn't hold the sticks in one hand, so he'd put the stick in his hand and then gaffa tape his hand up so the stick would stay there.

I got to realise that I didn't really want to play in a rock band. When I was in my late teens or early twenties I heard Fats Waller and Ella Fitzgerald. When I first heard Ella I thought that's so beautiful, I can't believe how beautiful that is. She was the best of the best.

Then I heard Oscar Peterson, and he just blew me away like, "I gotta do that". So I have been trying ever since.

The important thing for people who are musically inclined is to keep trying. Keep playing and learning. Learn the harder stuff, extend yourself. Don't keep playing the easy stuff, learn something challenging. I think that's the key, because that makes it interesting, to me.

I sit down with transcriptions of George Shearing and Oscar Peterson and Bill Evans and people like that, trying to play what they played, and I cannot, but some of it rubs off and after a while you think ok, I can do that. Learn the scales until they become second nature and you don't have to think about the scales any more. Learn chords; you have got to learn chords.

When I was younger we never went to a club or a pub that didn't have live music. If there was no music, we didn't go. We knew who the bass player was, we knew who the guitarist was, we knew where the album was engineered, the name of the engineer, we were really into it.

But people don't know these things any more. I found, just casually talking to some of the kids about music, they would mention a band, and I'd ask who is the guitarist, and they don't know, they don't know the names of people. They don't seem to idolise the musicians; they idolise the image, they idolise the sound, but mainly the image. You know, they look good, it's all part of the video packaging — not the individual musicians, they don't seem to take much notice of them.

And I think that's sad.

MOVING TO THE BUSH ON A STRING AND SOME AIR

Nicole Vieser and Philip Wilson

New musicians arrive in the region

Nicole leads off ...

My grandmother and mother were both pianists and I used to sit at the piano when I was a toddler and pick out nursery rhymes. My grandmother heard me doing that one day and told mum I should learn the violin. I started lessons when I was six.

I began with the Suzuki method where you learn to play by ear, then I moved on to the traditional method of learning to read music. I studied all through primary school and high school, then went on to complete my Bachelor's Degree at the Sydney Conservatorium. I remember getting this very fat theory book, like a children's activity book, on how to read music and write music and I enjoyed doing that.

I think there should be more music in schools; there certainly should be more music education and it should be an integral part of the school curriculum. When I went to school I was the only person who played a musical instrument, there was no music class and there was no opportunity to learn an instrument. I think it is really important that schools, and kids, have that opportunity because it can help in so many ways.

I think every kid should have at least a chance of singing or playing an instrument.

Some kids will not be musical, but at least they have had a go. I just think it is very very important, and we don't have enough of it in schools.

I teach at a public school in Lane Cove on Sydney's north shore. I have been there for seven or eight years now and have helped the string programme to blossom so to speak. It was not very big at the time when I arrived, but now it's developed really well and we have three different ensembles.

It's kids from kindy to year six, and we have a beginner string group, an inter-

mediate string group and an advanced string group.

I teach violin, piano and cello at Bungendore public school and I have started teaching at St Bede's in Braidwood as well this term. That's going really well. At St Bede's, we'll have a little music concert at the end of the year. I want the kids to perform at any, or every, festival and function that happens. Get them out there, having fun, spread the word.

I don't play anymore in orchestras, and I miss certain repertoires from my orchestral playing days; playing some of the symphonies that have great string parts. I certainly miss certain symphonic works, and being a part of a large orchestra and having sound all around you.

I learned fiddling in Galway in the late '90s. I have a couple of fiddling students as well, and we did some busking outside the Fickle Pickle on a Sunday morning, in the courtyard. We are planning to get some Irish session

musicians together and do sessions at the pub on a Sunday afternoon or something like that. It would be nice to connect with other like musicians who play that sort of music.

Philip takes up the baton ...

I work with the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra which performs in Sydney at the Opera House. I have been doing that for twenty-five years, and like Nicole, I teach in Sydney at several schools including the Conservatorium High School, and I have a private studio where I teach on Saturday mornings and I'm hoping to eventually get the same here. The rest of the time I spend down here in delightful Mongarlowe.

My parents both learned the piano and hated it so they thought I should do something else. They had quite a good range of recordings of classical music, we were always playing those recordings at home and I really enjoyed the sound of the French horn, in particular recordings like the New World Symphony by Dvořák.

That fired my attention, so when in primary school, I did those little tests to see whether you were suited to any instruments.

I did quite well in that and they offered me the French horn which my parents were very happy with because it was free.

When I left school I continued to play in some small ensembles, and sought tuition from a very fine tutor, and he



suggested that I audition for the conservatorium which I did, got through that and then I came to Sydney to work with the opera. The horn itself was brought into the orchestra in the early 18th century, and then it got valves in the late 18th century or early 19th century. I have played in a few jazz ensembles

in Sydney, usually with some ensemble coming from other countries who want to fill their touring band with some local extras — that's been fun. Jazz is hard work, it's much easier playing in the opera. I have played in some chamber groups as well. There is an ensemble at the moment called Omega, that is playing

some very interesting repertoire like Beethoven's seventh symphony which obviously was written for a symphony orchestra, but in Beethoven's time it was also arranged for an octet of eight wind instruments. These sorts of things are quite exciting. It was broadcast on ABC FM recently and it went down quite well.



Dad playing and having music around the house as a kid was what first inspired me to play. My siblings, and other older kids around Majors Creek were all playing too.

It was just something that I was sort of always a part of. We learnt harmony singing sitting around the kitchen table jamming with family and friends, us kids all knew our bit — where we fit in as it were.

I was always into a broad range of music aside from the folk and roots style stuff that we played at home. I spent years moping about to all that was new, romantic and British, and grungy and recorded in Seattle. I'm a big fan of Australian rock from the 80s and 90s — and I spent a bunch of time promoting and listening to drum and bass and other electronic dance styles of music. So clearly I have a really diverse taste in music.

Career-wise I am currently not playing or writing at all, choosing to focus my energies on the Majors Creek Festival.

Hannah Gillespie

talks about families and festivals

I love the process of writing and recording and I miss working with amazing musicians in the studio space. I am sure that pull will get me back in to make another album in the not too distant future.

I never was a big fan of playing live, I have issues with anxiety that can make it a very painful experience but when I have an exciting album to promote it seems to help cut through some of that — however I'd have a heap of practice required to get match fit, that is for sure!

In this region I think we are actually starting to come back into an exciting time for music. Aside from the festival there are others that are now promoting quality musical events.

There is the Araluen Gold series of

high quality performer concerts put on in the Araluen Hall by newcomers to the area, Holly Downes and Chris Stone — both amazing musicians in their own right. Concerts put on by another new resident we are lucky to have, Keith Potger from the Seekers, are great of course and the wonderful summer 'Sunday Sessions' run at the Commercial Hotel which offers space for people to hone their skills in front of an audience in between acts who are more experienced.

Plus there is the great work that Gordon Waters and the team from Braidwood FM who have started promoting their own shows and working with myself and the Festival on a series of others including the recently successful tour of Fanny Lumsden.

The vast majority of the work that is being done bringing music to our region is done voluntarily. It would be wonderful to have more financial support for music and arts in the region that made it more viable for local performances to continue.

I have been speaking to the new QPRC in regards to the Festival and generally, about how we could use the amazing and unique musical experiences in our beautiful region to promote tourism and what kind of financial support may be available. They are very supportive of investigating this further which is positive.

And now for a plug for the Majors Creek Festival.

The Festival was started by Dad and a small group of other dedicated Braidwood Folk Music Club members over twenty years ago. He and the first committee ran it for ten years or so and then it was headed up for a further ten years by Sue Rendell. The current committee including myself took over in 2014 and so this will be our third Festival in November 2016.

The Festival is a weekend of folk and roots music, dance displays and lessons, instrument workshops, kids programs, delicious food stalls, interesting craft stalls, camping and catching up with friends.

The new committee is working to bring a new generation of folk and roots acts to our area; each year presenting a fresh line-up with a little of the old thrown in. There is so much fantastic new music and musicians reinvigorating the folk music and festival scene and it is a pleasure to be part of it at such an exciting time.

In terms of prestige, it's hard to top having your song played at the Sydney 2000 Olympics, and that's exactly what Neil Murray achieved with 'My Island Home'. A founding member of the pioneering Indigenous group the Warumpi Band, Murray's songs have also been recorded by Mary Black, Jimmy Little, Missy Higgins, Powderfinger and Christine Anu.

Hailing from Melbourne, the award-winning Americana foursome Raised by Eagles are true storytellers. Having won Best Country Album and Best Emerging Artist at the Age Music Victoria Awards, the fellas were even invited to the prestigious Americana Music Festival in Nashville, Tennessee.

Speaking of folk cred, it's little wonder the daughter of celebrated poet Tim Thorne would turn out to be such a striking songsmith. Described as a 'folk singer ... through the prism of Beth Orton or Joni Mitchell', Melbourne artist Lucie Thorne is teaming up with the much-loved 'rhythm king' from Sydney, Hamish Stuart, for the Festival gig.

The Joni Mitchell thread continues as one of Harry Hooke's cited inspirations. This Aria-nominated singer/songwriter from Gippsland has likely played almost every town in Australia in true troubadour tradition. Giving up a life as a would-be lawyer, the roaming musician puts his music 'somewhere between James Taylor and Nirvana'.

Meanwhile, the music of Australian-Fijian singer/songwriter Andrew Kirwin is a rich tapestry woven with soul, funk, gospel, hip-hop and blues. The Sunshine Coast indie artist has played all over Australia and is one of our most up-and-coming musicians.

Returning this year are Festival favourites from 2015, The Timbers. Their thumping rhythms of folk, roots and 'Celtic bushman brassy punk' are guaranteed to make the audience swing.

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Kim Pacheco

Susie Edmonds talks to Kim about becoming an Australian citizen

What was the prime reason for becoming a citizen?

There are many; for the most part though, I really like Australia. I like the culture, I like the people. The land is beautiful and coming from a big city and then moving to a nice small country town was like finding serenity, so I didn't want to leave. And how marvellous it is to have an opportunity to choose where it is you can be. So when I had the opportunity, I took it.

Why take the plunge into full citizenship though? You could have continued living here couldn't you?

Yes. As a permanent resident I had a lot of the same rights as a citizen but not in its entirety. You can't get a passport, you cannot vote, you can't have a say.

That's important for me, to have a say. If I'm going to be politically minded or make any political statement but yet

not immerse myself in it, then I feel hypocritical. I also find it remarkable that I can be a citizen of both the United States and Australia. I think that's a privilege and an honour and if I have an intention to spend my life here, well the remainder of my life here then I should be a part of it.

What brought you to Braidwood?

Initially I came here with my partner. It was an opportunity to have a life somewhere else and it was just fortuitous that my partner had come from another country. So coming here again and not only falling in love with that individual but falling in love with Australia as well, why not take the adventure? Why not try something new and different?

I wasn't very happy with the political climate in the United States at the time. It was still dealing with the bust to the economy and I didn't like the

politics so that was an incentive and being in love was just the icing on the cake. I didn't see any reason to not do it.

What are some of the differences between Australia and the US for you?

You mean, other than you call your flip flops, thongs that you wear on your feet not as undergarments? That still makes me laugh. Interpersonal relationships are quite different here than they are in the United States. The relationships that men and women have in the States seem so much more about the ways to form romantic connections where as there are genuine friendships that are accepted and expected to occur between men and women here which is always interesting and nice.

I find women in this culture, at least heterosexual women, to be far more aggressive than in the United States. I find them far more independent on average. There are always exceptions to the rule, but my observation is that they are less inclined to immediately run into relationships, they're more career oriented and not to say that heterosexuals are not attracted to the opposite sex but it does not seem to be their main objective which is kind of interesting. Australians are racist in a different way.

Expand your thoughts on that...

In the United States if you are not white, you are less than. You can be educated, you can even be of means and yet you are still considered less than. Whereas in Australia, with the exception of Indigenous Australians, which is still disgusting nonetheless, if you are well spoken and educated you get treated with more respect. This was a really, really big shock for me. It was probably one of the main reasons why I felt so comfortable staying in Australia even without family and my partner.

I never was treated with so much respect. Respect for people of colour in America, if ever gotten from strangers, is hard-earned. You have to have a daily interaction with these people over time in order to earn respect.

The other way racism affects a person in the United States is that it is understood that you don't matter, it is understood that you are not as attractive, it is understood you are never going to go past a certain level in society and everyone knows it. Even the lowest of the low, even the most uneducated, unsophisticated, uncultured white American will still feel them-

selves superior to people of colour and that's where the idea of privilege comes in to it.

And I am sure that is how it is towards Aboriginals, which again as I said is disgusting, but fortunately for me I am not treated that way. That doesn't mean that I don't acknowledge that it doesn't exist here. That doesn't mean that I haven't heard racial slurs towards Asians, Jews and Muslims. Just today day I heard someone saying there is a suburb that has the largest population of Muslims in Australia and if we only bomb them ... then we'll be okay! Well for a nation that has had so little by way of terrorism that seems such a visceral attitude.

Anyway for me here, no one ever crosses to the other side of the street when they see me, no one sneers, no one assumes that I am less than, no one assumes I am uneducated.

What do people assume about you here?

The one assumption is 'Oh my God you're from Brooklyn, you must have been in a gang', or something like that. Cliché assumptions yes but again not the assumption of less than...! But again that's different than racism.

Racism for me is the ability to pass legislation based on someone being superior over another. You can have biases or be bigoted and have prejudices, which I think is a human thing and I think we are all going to do it but when you can apply that legally ... then we have a problem.

In the States it is applied legally. So to really understand all the isms, there are laws that restrict woman, laws that restrict homosexuals, laws that restrict people of colour, all of these things. When we talk about racism we talk about our America perception of racism for a person of colour, caused by the power and ability to effect legislation, which as yet we don't have the power to effect. So when someone says to me that someone's been bigoted to them I say that doesn't make them a racist that makes them a bigot. They don't have the power to talk to their Congressman to get laws passed so that people of colour can't come to their store, you know, those sorts of things.

How is being gay different in Australia or indeed is it?

It's hard to say because the majority of my time has only been in Braidwood and no one has been rude or outlandish. I've had more people be abusive to me in the United States. I don't think I can make an honest



assessment on this because I've been in a small town in which everyone knows everybody. It is really hard to have those kind of prejudices because you have to see them every day and I think that's how we get over racism or sexism or homophobia. If you've got to see me every day and you see that I do struggle with the same issues as you, it becomes very difficult to keep that division.

Any problems being gay in Braidwood?

I have had no issues being gay here. You know, there are always going to be people who will derive a larger sense of ego by pushing someone else down or again by looking at other people's issue as opposed to their own. Have I heard other people speak of gay people in this town negatively? Absolutely! But I think it is not necessarily because the person is gay but because they had a negative inter-

action. It wasn't about their sexuality but then again it is also trying to understand sexuality in general. The statement may be made that a woman is acting too manly — I mean, what the hell is that? If a woman was standing there and she adjusted her testicles, then I'd say that was a manly act but ... Look I am openly gay and some people have felt comfortable to have that conversation with me so I don't think it was homophobia because I think if it were then they wouldn't introduce me into the conversation.

I think that people confuse gender and sexuality. I think that people make this assumption that if a person is a lesbian she doesn't have any sexual desires for men. You can still find men sexual attractive — you just don't want to have sex with them. And you can still have sex with men and still consider yourself a lesbian. It takes a lot to offend me and I would prefer someone say something unfiltered and feel comfortable enough to be unfiltered so that we can have that dialogue as opposed to being on guard and not say it. Don't tippee toe around me; we're never going to get along that way.

So what do you hope the future will bring now that you're a citizen?

I didn't become a citizen because I expected something extra although I can now apply for government positions if I choose. I never really thought of anything other than being able to participate fully. Being able to put my shoulders back and my chin up and say I am also part of your citizenry. I don't have any expectations. I'll go with what happens and try my best and try to enjoy it.

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Can you say that again?

It's better to ask than to pretend you heard says Paul Cockram

Confession time. You might have said things to me over the years that I didn't really hear. The fact is, I have a problem with my hearing.

In my case it's a combination of an inability to hear high-frequency sounds combined with a dose of tinnitus; the Latin origin means 'tinkling or ringing like a bell'. Perhaps around 18% of Australians suffer from tinnitus to some degree.

Like a lot of people with later-life hearing loss I'm guilty of doing bad things in my youth. As a magazine designer I spent an awful lot of time in printing factories standing next to gigantic web-fed, two-storey-high printing presses that emitted a fearful racket.

'Blam blam blam blam over a thunderous rumbling.' "Can you get rid of that smudge on the side?" "What?" "The smudge just there." "Say again?" "Oh, never mind, it'll probably get trimmed off anyway."

In those days no one wore ear protection in the printing industry. In my case this self-inflicted damage was exacerbated when I chilled after a hard day in the machine room by blasting Pink Floyd's 'Wish You Were Here' into my brain via headphones. It's still a great album but these days it's more like, 'wish I could hear'.

For many years, although I didn't realise it at the time, I was disguising my hearing incompetence with a variety of techniques. Fudging it is not so hard because if you're about to step in front of a moving car the person who alerts you is not going to whisper.

It's the quieter parts of life where the non-listening techniques are first employed. Nodding and becoming adept at following the flowing cadence makes run-of-the-mill anecdotes easy to deal with. A simple, "Oh I know," every so often will usually do the trick.

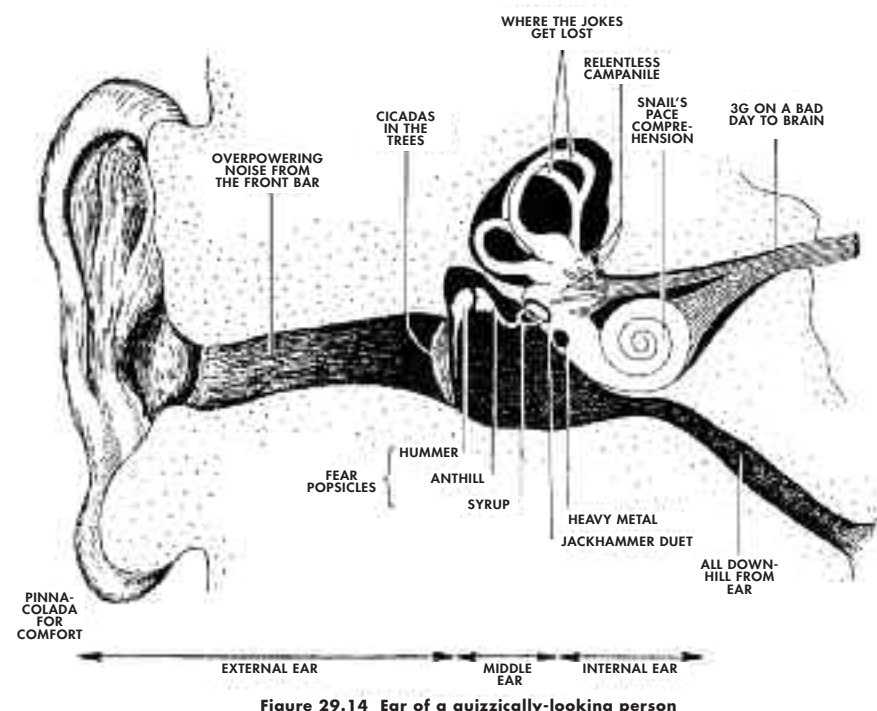


Figure 29.14 Ear of a quizzically-looking person

What a terrible irony it is to develop a reputation as a good listener while not hearing half the words. More fool the talker who can bang on for ages without noticing I suppose.

It was in 2008 when I was elected to Palerang Council that I first discovered I couldn't cope with situations where I really needed to hear everything being said. A hearing test clearly showed my high-frequency sounds deficiency and I was fitted with a [bloody expensive] hearing aid.

One great social disadvantage of poor hearing is the inability to follow the normal prompts of everyday conversation — to hear the little gaps when it could be your turn to speak. Highly excitable occasions like dinner parties with high background noise and everyone going at a million miles an hour are especially difficult.

In my case I've noticed a slight lag between words said and their meaning registering in my brain. So the faster the words flow the harder it is to keep up with the conversation.

Quips are difficult to catch and so is following the witty rapid-fire repartee that is sure to follow if the dinner party is sufficiently well lubricated. It's a real piss-off to miss out on a joke that everyone else is cracking up over.

For people who don't hear effortlessly, reading is a real joy. SBS is my television station of choice; the dialogue in any language is like gentle music and I've become so adept at reading subtitles I don't notice them any more.

So reading a council business paper is no big deal. There's no: "Oh just get on

with it will you," like there is with listening. Hard of hearing people are especially disadvantaged and dismayed by waffle-speak.

Reading, for deaf(ish) people, is hearing everything perfectly for once. If you get bored by written, hearing-in-your-head waffle, skip ahead; if you need it repeated, simply read it again.

After reading the business paper and writing notes, council meetings too were more enjoyable and easier than, say, your average dinner party. The Chair gives you the call, you take a breath, compose your thoughts and off you go. No one speaks or interrupts until your time is up.

While I've been on council we've introduced microphone etiquette for most meetings which I think has been of benefit to us all; councillors, staff and the public gallery. It's an area where Palerang is more advanced than Queanbeyan. While I'm still around I'll do my best to have all meetings in the new QPRC audible and therefore accessible for everyone.

If you know someone who seems a bit slow or looks at you quizzically, it's very likely they're not hearing you properly. Be kind to them. The hard-of-hearing get on best with people who speak slowly, distinctly and sparingly.

If you are a hard-of-hearing person, get tested and learn your options. Admit to yourself and to others that you have a disability and then people who care for you will act considerately. So there you go. There's my personal and political confession — but maybe I haven't heard the last of you yet.

The Allergy season is here!

It is that time of the year where you may suddenly start to sneeze, the nose runs or is blocked and the eyes can get itchy and runny. It is spring and the pollen season has started and so has your seasonal allergy. These are all common symptoms of hay fever. Some people can also get headache and have symptoms that is so severe that they can't sleep or concentrate and in general feel unwell and tired.

What really happens is that your immune system, which normally attacks viruses and bacteria that you do not want in your body, mistake the pollen you breathe in for an intruder and launches an attack. This result is your nasal passages become inflamed and produce more mucus. Hence the swelling leading to blocked nose and the increased runny nose. It can also lead to itchy and watery eyes.

Things you can do to reduce exposure to pollen:

- Check pollen calendar on websites like allergy.org.au or get a phone app like "Canberra pollen count and forecast". Or know when to listen for the daily forecast on television or radio.
- Stay indoors as much as possible: especially after midday in spring when the pollen count forecast is high, and on windy days or after thunderstorms.
- Shower after outdoor activities to wash off pollen.
- Wash your eyes often with lubricating eye drops or saline water to flush out any pollen.
- Flush your nasal passages with a nasal rinse like "NeilMed Sinus Rinse" or "Flo Sinus Care" to mechanically remove pollen from the nasal cavities.

Many treatments are available to buy in the pharmacy today, things that rapidly relieve symptoms and preventative treatments to control symptoms. As with all things in health remember that it is the preventative treatment that is most important as it stops the symptoms from happening in the first place.

Some commonly used types of medication are:

- Intranasal corticosteroid sprays** — these nasal sprays contain very low-dose steroids and are one of the most effective treatments for allergic rhinitis. They need to be used regularly to be effective. Please ask for a demonstration in the pharmacy on how to use them correctly to get the best effect.
- Non-sedating antihistamine medications** — these may be useful to control sneezing and itching, but are not as effective as intranasal corticosteroid sprays to control a severely blocked or runny nose.
- Eye drops** — may relieve itchy, swollen or runny eyes. Please ask for a demonstration in the pharmacy on how to instil your eye drops correctly.

Please discuss with your local community pharmacist or doctor which combination or products will be best for you.

If you are pregnant or breastfeeding please ask your pharmacist for advice on what products would be best for you and are safe to use for your baby. The advice will be tailored to your specific situation.

Bente Hart and Julie Ballard
Braidwood Pharmacy

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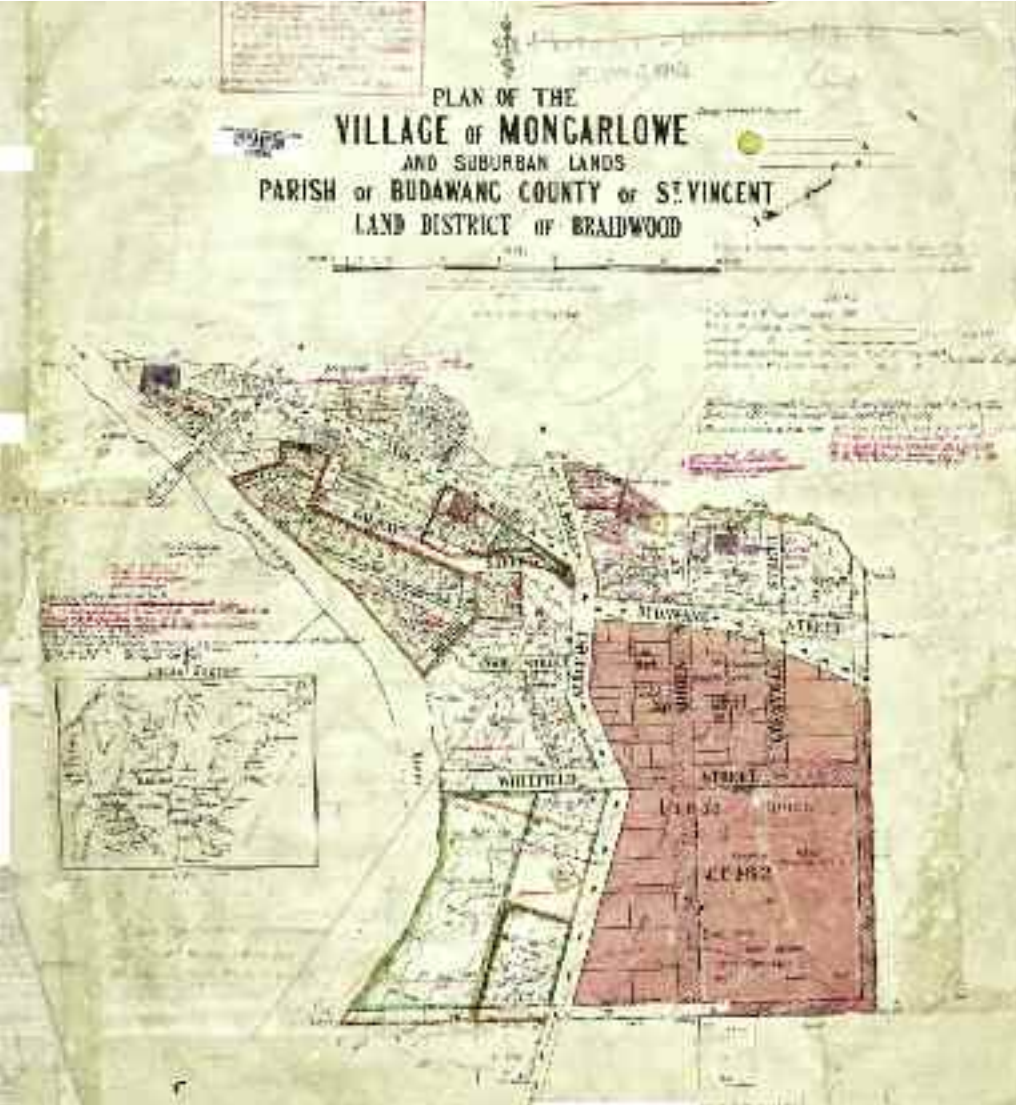
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- Home Medication Reviews (on referral from your doctor)
- Medication profiling using MedsCheck (development of a medication list and detection of potential problems)
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- Leave of Absence certificates
- Supply of medication for Hepatitis C treatment

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Mongarlowe and the Little River goldfields

by Netta Ellis

Gold was first discovered at the Little River field in March 1852, and in April 233 licences were issued to miners by the government, and six licences to conduct businesses in the field. This compared with 448 gold licences in Araluen, and 490 at Bell's Creek. The latter had ten business licences.

George Kershaw and his son William were among the first miners in the Mongarlowe area. Kershaw was a plasterer who had migrated in 1841 from England with his wife Selina. He kept a journal of the voyage and his experiences in the colony. He settled first in Sydney, working there on the construction of many private houses and on the new Government House. In 1849 he came to Braidwood as a constable in the police force, accompanied by his wife and the three

surviving children of ten confinements. In July 1851 he recorded that his son William, then aged 23, had left for the Bathurst diggings. George must have left the police force soon afterwards because in September 1852, he and his son were mining at Warrambucca Creek and had got gold worth £7.17.6 in the first few weeks. He recorded 15 sales of gold in all, until February 26 1853; the total value being £311.3.7. In less than six months he had made a considerable sum, far more than a constable's yearly income. The average for a farm labourer at the time was about £45 per year plus rations and accommodation. The correspondent for The Empire in March 1853, quoted on page 30, referred to George Kershaw as a lame man at work in Saw Pit Gully. Kershaw noted in his journal in

HISTORY

September 1836 before he left England 'I, George Kershaw, had a severe fall from the top of the wall at York Castle'. Again, in August 1850, he had another fall while crossing a bridge at Braidwood, at a quarter to 11 at night, breaking his left leg and ankle. Perhaps these disabilities made him even more accident prone, because he stated in his journal that in September 1854 he broke his leg and four ribs 'by the fall of a tree in Sawpit Gully'. However he lived to be 77, dying in Braidwood in 1878, after being clerk of the parish of St Andrew's Anglican church for many years. His son William was also a loyal church member for 50 years and a plaque in the church records this fact. But Selina Kershaw did not enjoy their prosperity for very long as she died in January 1855.

Entrepreneurs such as Charles Isaac Watson supplied the needs of the hundreds of miners on the scattered mining sites along the Mongarlowe river and its tributaries. Watson was a tinsmith by trade, but turned to printing, in which he had some experience. He founded the *Braidwood Dispatch* newspaper in 1854. He sold it soon afterwards to John Musgrave and with the versatility common at the time he turned to building houses in the Mongarlowe district in partnership with his brother, John. These would probably have been two or four roomed weatherboard houses. When this market declined he returned to Braidwood and in 1859 began his second newspaper, the *Braidwood Daily News*. These business enterprises enabled him to keep his mother, Susannah, in comfort in a cottage in Braidwood in the later years of her life. Susannah had been transported to the colony in 1829 and gave birth to Charles while in the Paramatta Female Factory.

After the Free Selection Act was passed in 1861, many of the miners selected blocks on Crown land in the Mongarlowe district. Like George Bentley at Bentley's Point they sometimes tried three or four times to secure a suitable block. They continued to fossick and search for gold when there was a good water supply and developed a small dairy herd, and an orchard and vegetable garden, with the help of family labour. George Bentley was said to be the first cheesemaker in the Braidwood district, using a log of green hard wood, a lever and a stump for his press. Each week the dairy produce was taken to Braidwood, the regional market town, and sold to the shops and hotels.

STILL MORE HISTORY

George's wife Mary, a devout Methodist, taught Sunday School to the local children in her own home, and they attended a church service in Mongarlowe or at one of the other small townships nearby, such as Charleyong.

Unlike many other church members of the time, George and Mary's beliefs were reflected in their sympathetic behaviour to the Chinese and Aborigines and they received their friendship in return. The Chinese storekeeper, Ha Ping, was kind and thoughtful when Mrs Bentley and daughter Mary arrived at his store with a basket of homemade butter to sell to him. They had walked five miles and had fallen in the freezing river while trying to cross a temporary slippery wooden plank bridge. He invited them to warm their feet and dry their shoes by his fire and then served them dinner. They in their turn gave a night's accommodation to a Chinese traveller who had lost his way in the dark. Chee Dock Nomchong with his brother was another Chinese storekeeper who began his business in the Mongarlowe village. After his brother died in 1884 he sold his store to Hop War and moved to Braidwood, where his store and his family became an integral part of the community.

The Bentleys treated the fast-diminishing number of local Aborigines with charity and pity and enquired into their traditions and laws with interest.

It is interesting to note that in fact two women of Aboriginal descent, married to white men, were given land reserves in the Mongarlowe area by the NSW government. May Anne Willoughby received 140 acres in 1879 and lived there with her husband and eight children, mining for gold, running cattle and horses and growing maize and potatoes. Margaret Bryant received 8.5 acres in 1885. Her husband was 80 years old and she mined for gold with her 17 year-old son. These reserves were revoked in 1916 and 1893 respectively, presumably when the members of the families had dispersed.

For families such as the Bentleys, life was a mixture of happiness and sorrow, success and failure. For young Mary Bentley the river was their terror in flood time and their delight in the summer when they swam in the warm waters, picked wild raspberries on the banks for the Sunday pudding and gathered bunches of wild flowers. For the Methodists the gaiety of the dance hall next to the store in Mongarlowe village was not allowed, but family weddings and tea meetings were merry occasions. But crises and problems were many. Children wandered and were lost, or fell from a shying horse. Such was the fate of young George Bentley, who died on the journey to the doctor in Braidwood. The vagaries of climate could soon turn a time of prosperity to one of loss. A severe summer drought followed by a dry cold winter could wipe out a whole herd. In the 1880s there was a severe seven month drought, followed by a very cold winter and a severe snow storm. The stock of the district lay in heaps, starved and frozen. The Bentley family decided to sell up and go to Sydney. Even as late as 1923 nearly all the stock in the district died after a drought and a severe winter.

John Appleyard was also a fossicker on the Little River field in the 1870s and the letters he wrote to his friends in England in 1877 and 1878 are a fascinating insight into the life of the district. The invasion of rabbits into the Braidwood district in the last few years of the nineteenth



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SPENCER GREEN'S EUCALYPTUS OIL STILL, BUDAWANG.

century made the grazing industry even more of a gamble and gradually with the falling gold returns the population declined. In 1908 as a result of the enquiry into the renewal of hotel licences in south-eastern NSW, the population was estimated at only 300. The closure of the only

remaining hotel, the Rising Sun, led to a further down-turn in the economy. However, new and old industries survived and even flourished when prices were high. The young sons of the settlers such as Allan Radburn and his brothers turned to rabbiting as a part-time income. At first the carcasses were taken to Braidwood every second day to the freezing works. Later, when the relative prices changed, the skins only were retained and sold. Before the first World War, in the 1930s, and particularly after the second World War, the high prices for eucalyptus oil led to many stills being established on the banks of the creeks.

Timber mills had been established in the early days of settlement to meet the demand for pit props and for hard wood for building purposes. Some were built on the river and were worked by water power and others used steam power. Mountain ash eucalyptus sieberi, also called silver topped ash, and messmate eucalyptus obliqua were local timbers much valued for their strength and durability. Late in 1915 George McRae and Reuben Burke, with the assistance of William Radburn, erected a sawmill on the original block occupied by McRae, Ross and Steele. It was steam driven and a boiler of 10 tons weight, which came from a dredge on the Araluen river, was hauled to the site of the mill. The steam operated a circular saw for the cutting of the logs, and a vertical saw for cutting the flitches — ie the lengths of the logs — which were then cut to the required sizes.

Logs were brought in from the nearby forests and later from further afield by bullock wagon teams. However in 1923 the mill closed down and it was moved to Bombay, west of Braidwood, where it was worked until 1928. Before it was closed, sufficient timber was cut for Reuben Burke to build a store at Mongarlowe village. Other McRae descendants operated mills nearer the headwaters of the Mongarlowe river, adjacent to the Monga forest.

Since the 1950s the rabbits have been controlled by myxomatosis, the market for eucalyptus oil is much smaller, and the timber mills have closed. Viable grazing properties are confined to the areas of basalt soil. However, the effect of drought on cattle and sheep numbers has been lessened by improved water conservation and the ease with which modern transport brings fodder in to the district and takes animals out for agistment in other areas. A local horse training property and the Bondola trout farm with multiple tourist attractions have diversified rural land use in the last few years.

The population of Mongarlowe has stabilised and is now increasing. Its seclusion and the beauty of the streams, the mountains and the native vegetation have attracted artists, craftspeople, writers and conservationists. New houses are being built and old ones restored. The Tombarra Holiday Units, one kilometre from the village, attract visitors from the cities seeking a bush holiday.

Many of the new young residents are seeking the advice and stories of the past from the old people born at the turn of the century, and eucalyptus oil is being distilled again, with their guidance. The Cricket Club is active again and the neglected community hall and cricket ground five kilometres north of the village, which served both the Mongarlowe and Charleys Forest communities, is receiving attention. We hope this book telling the story of Mongarlowe and the Little River goldfields will contribute to the renaissance of community life.

This story was written by Netta Ellis as the Introduction to 'Mongarlowe and the Little River Goldfields' by Bruce Russell. It was first published by the Braidwood and District Historical Society © 1989.



Cars in the Bush — DAVID ANTHONY
... slowly losing their modernist hopes and dreams and starting to melt organically into their surrounds. Each has story of being an enabler of various human activities — of which the vehicle shows faint traces.

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HORRORSCOPE FOR THE SPRING MONTHS OF 2016:

To allow for the vagaries of the universe and interpretive inexactitude, it might pay to read everyone else's stars as well.

GEMINI

You could be under the influence of the Venus-Mars humanity or if you're gay, the Bernardi-Abetz mendacity. There'll be no legal conjunction for you until some basic cosmic decency returns to parliament. This might involve waiting out the current three year lunar cycle as we lurch from Cazimi to "Cor Blimey".

CANCER

Avoid communication gaps this month, move to Canberra, or wherever the telco executives live with their blisteringly-fast soapy downloads. Telstra mandarins especially, should be sent to some remote place about which they care not a whit where the reception is 24/7 shouse. Anywhere on our block would qualify.

LEO

Your dominant planet is Combust, that's conjunct the Sun within 8½° of orb, but do not confuse this with Gonebust, which is when a company director with 1° in smarm and 2°s in public misfeasance is pleading loss of memory and everybody's hard-earned dosh.

VIRGO

How's your credit card maxing? Only a few hundred over? Oh bad luck. Try to get it to more than \$8000 in the red and then a whole world of exciting, smiling debt consolidation agents, as seen on TV, will make your life a joy. Honestly, just go on a binge and then it's as easy as picking up the phone.

LIBRA

The planet Pluto symbolises power, lust, obsession, tenacity, concentration, death, rebirth, transformation, secrets, the Great Mysteries, the occult, and the Shadow (what we don't want to face in

ourselves). It has recently been expelled from the solar system as a warning to the other planets to, 'just chill, man'. Take from this what you will as we orbit the refrigerator in a corpulent direction.

SCORPIO

Around about now for you Saturn transits through Scorpio in a retrograde mode while the front bar patrons transit through in a reprobate mood. Is your glass half full ... or are you? Are you seeing the world through rosé-coloured glasses? Sober can be fun.

SAGITTARIUS

You are now in a parallel universe. On the television you see actual reports of a man running for President of the Ugliest Scary Arsenal of nuclear weapons ever assembled; and whose mantra is, "You're fired!". Buddha, Jesus, Krishna and Allah help us if he gets to the war room with the big button.

**CAPRICORN**

You may see the writing on the wall this month, especially if you have young children. It's just a cute phase and only slightly likely to lead to wearing baseball caps reversed, buying spray cans and redecorating Sydney Trains with once again adorable, oddly indecipherable squiggles.

AQUARIUS

As you know, the collection of planetary energies is very powerful and complex. Find the right person this month and you might experience multiple conjunctions, even without using the AAA batteries. If you're too signs apart it's sextile, but if that's too hard or cold, try on the carpet.

PISCES

This month singles may suffer burning or tingling on an area of skin on the trunk ... what? Oh, sorry I thought you said shingles — giz another drink. Herpes, god of, "I'll tell you about the partners I've had some day — gosh you won't believe it", might lead to a frank discussion about dedicated relationships.

ARIES

Jupiter will belch through your 2nd house and stupider will spew forth in the Upper House as our legislative future runs the gauntlet of a ward culture not seen since 'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest'. Senators with One Notion: "fish and chips hooray — falafel go home!"

TAURUS

Tea leaves in the cup, cat across your path, stars in the heavens surrounding us all. Pretenders in the parliament, crooks in the boardroom, cheats on the sports field heading for a fall. We can make our own destinies, or wait around to be told what's in store for us. Hmm?

Power games

IPART sets regulated gas prices, provides guidance on solar feed-in tariffs and monitors the competitiveness of the retail electricity market.

To get the best deal we need to explore our options

Let's talk a bit about fairness. Imagine you are at the counter and the person in front of gets his take-away coffee and the barista says, "That'll be \$3.75".

When you get your coffee she says, "\$4.25 thanks".

"What?" you exclaim. "You charged the other bloke 50¢ less."

"Ah yes, but he's on our 'Coffee-plus' plan," she says while wiping the milk spout. "It's all there on the net if you go to 'coffeemadeeasy.com'. You have to shop around these days you know."

That's what it's come to with energy prices since NSW deregulated them in 2014. Of course we do have IPART, the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal, to keep an eye on how it's working out.

As it says on its website:

IPART provides independent regulatory decisions and advice to protect the ongoing interests of the consumers, taxpayers and citizens of NSW.

A draft report has been released by IPART to explain how it's all going and calling for submissions. I hope many people read it and make submissions. Here's a sample:

Some take the view that 'if you pay more because you don't shop around, the market isn't working'. We consider that if you can pay a lower price by shopping around, the market is working. [Their emphasis] A number of competitive markets demonstrate this. For example, customers can make substantial savings by shopping around when buying flights, consumer electronics, insurance, cars and mobile plans.

Yes, well, some might take the view that unlike the consumer items they list, electricity is a non-discretionary purchase that even internet-poor or uninterested people must buy.

But if you are paying too much for your energy it's all your own fault and IPART doesn't have much sympathy.

Customers have a role to play in improving the performance and competitiveness of a market. The more well-informed and engaged customers are, the more pressure there is on retailers to offer competitive prices and services.

That'll teach you for telling that pesky person who rang while you were cooking dinner to, "stuff off and leave you alone". That wasn't just an unsolicited nuisance call, that was capitalism going out of its way to save you your hard-earned moolah. You idiot!

Surely, you think, even if I don't go with all the churning [changing your supplier] and bargaining I won't be too badly off. Think again.

Some customers do not participate in the market and miss out on price discounts and other benefits on offer. For some, the cost of their time to switch to a cheaper deal outweighs their potential benefit from a lower bill.

And just to rub it in.

We consider these price differentials is a sign that the market is working, and support innovation and dynamic efficiency. By some customers paying more than they need to, retailers are able to offer lower prices to others who do shop around.

Cop that! Not only is your neighbour paying less than you but you are subsidising the whole circus by paying 'more than you need to'.

I can't see how IPART feels it is, 'protecting the ongoing interests of the consumers, taxpayers and citizens of NSW' while overseeing an approach to civil administration that

seems more like, 'the quick and the dead'.

People who simply can't keep up with this whole charade have not been entirely forgotten though. The draft report adds:

There are some customers who have difficulty engaging in the market because of language or other barriers. In our view there is an opportunity for retailers to assist these customers, along with targeted government assistance programs such as those already provided by the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW.

It's hard to believe that IPART would seriously suggest that utility companies will invest much effort in getting as many of their their customers as possible to pay less money.

If you had a call from a utility company that started off, "How would you like to pay less than we're currently charging you", what would you say?

"Is that a rhetorical question?" or, "Are you kidding me?" are two responses that spring to mind. Can't they just do it for everyone evenly and without being asked?

No, I guess not. It's not the way of the modern competitive world. Some readers, if you've got this far, might think I'm just whingeing or dreaming of a soppy utopia where no-one tries to get the jump on anyone else.

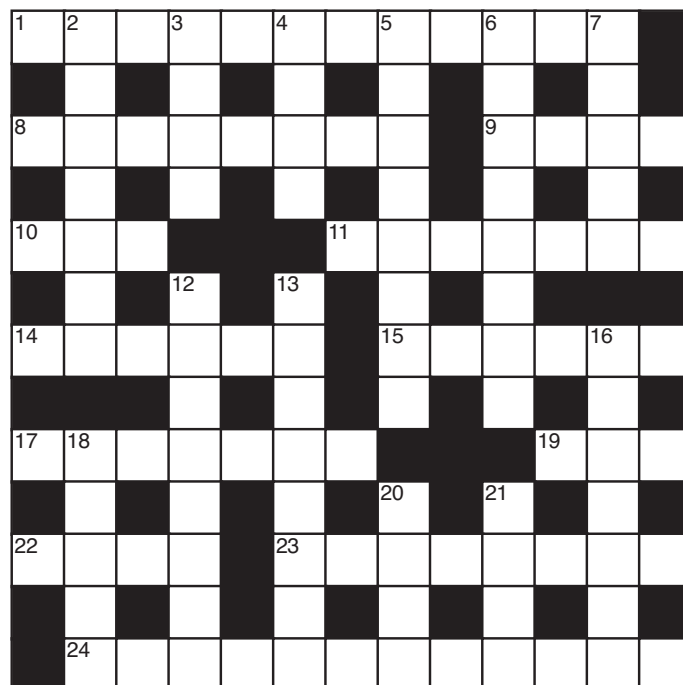
Fortunately, there is a solution that would keep everyone happy — collective bargaining. In a town like Braidwood we could present ourselves as an aggregate of customers who demand the best deal.

We pick an energy company — maybe one from the 8% of the trade energy companies that's not in the big three's 92% stranglehold — and offer them all our business.

We should get a good deal, everyone can relax and once again have the satisfaction of telling call centres to rack off.

We could also sleep at night safe in the knowledge that we are looking after our own community; the elderly, the computerless, the shy and anyone else who can't, or doesn't want to, live by a compulsory new-age ethos: 'If you don't pay you pay'.

BRAIDWOOD BAFFLER #10

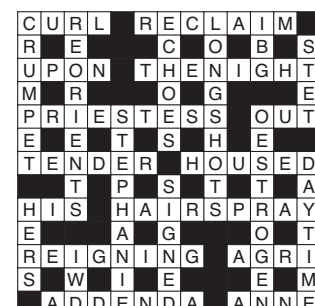
**ACROSS**

1. A Steinway, for instance. (7,5)
8. Sacred or secular composition for voice and instruments (8)
9. In toward (4)
10. Sweet or savoury filling inside a pastry casing (3)
11. Musical effect, adding expression (7)
14. In one voice (6)
15. Sort out your health claims with this (6)
17. She descends rock faces like this (7)
19. Period in time (3)
22. Fish with a very deep voice? (4)
23. Provider (8)
24. The most famous fiddle? (12)

DOWN

2. Applause (7)
3. Adduce (4)
4. Percentage, velocity (4)

5. Medley, gallimaufry (8)
6. Music on hallucinogens? (4,4)
7. Ensemble for instruments and voices or just a few bits? (5)
12. He evaluates (8)
13. 12D did this to do his job (8)
16. Upstart (7)
18. Category of instrument or money (col.) (5)
20. Wide boy (4)
21. Blot on the escutcheon (4)

SOLUTION TO BAFFLER #9

towards the future by Paul Cockram

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